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NEW WAYS IN EDUCATION--A STUDY OF THE PROJECT METHOD.

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A thesis submitted in the Department of Religious Education of the Pacific School of Religion in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

Berkeley, California.

April, 1930.

NEW WAYS IN EDUCATION--A STUDY OF THE PROJECT METHOD.

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NEW WAYS IN EDUCATION--A STUDY OF THE PROJECT METHOD

CHAPTER I

THE PROJECT IN THEORY

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years the term "project" has been added to our educational vocabulary. One has heard of the "project principle" and "project method" in theory and practice. However, these terms have been variously interpreted and applied, frequently in a conflicting manner, and for that reason, many educators to-day are reluctant to use them. For others, it has certainly become desirable, for the sake of clarity, to state the sense or meaning which they attach to the term "project".

In this study, the position of William Heard Kilpatrick will receive the most emphasis. Professor Kilpatrick was one of the first to find the "project" a usable term, and in the past several years his teachings have influenced many who have sought to put the principle into practice. Adaptations and interpretations of his viewpoint are common, but we shall endeavor to let Professor Kilpatrick's own words describe his position.

2. THE PROJECT AS THE "PURPOSEFUL ACT"

In an article entitled "The Project Method", published in 1918,[1] Professor Kilpatrick expressed the view that the project was but another name for the "purposeful act", and proposed that this concept

1. Teachers College Record, September, 1918; also Reprint, Teachers College Bulletin, Tenth Series, No. 3.

might be considered as the keynote of effective education. Here we must look for the meaning of a meaning, and inquire about the "purposeful act". Professor Kilpatrick wrote that he had been seeking for a concept which would unify several important factors in the educative process, one which would emphasize (a) wholehearted vigorous activity, (b) utilization of the laws of learning, (c) the ethical quality of conduct, and (d) the recognition that education is life. He felt that these factors were brought together in "the conception of wholehearted purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment, or more briefly, in the unit element of such activity, the hearty purposeful act". He wrote, "It is to this purposeful act with the emphasis on the word purpose that I myself apply the term 'project'." There may be individual projects and group projects; projects representing a wide variety of purposes; while those projects or purposeful acts which have the greatest amount of wholeheartedness are those which have the greatest psychological value.[1]

Proceeding, Professor Kilpatrick contended that "the purposeful act is the typical unit of the worthy life. Not that all purposes are good, but that the purposive life consists of purposive activity and not mere drifting ..... A man who habitually so regulates his life with reference to worthy social aims meets at once the demands for social efficiency and of moral responsibility. Such a one presents the ideal of democratic citizenship."[2] If the purposeful act is the typical unit of worthy life in a democratic society, it should be made the unit of school procedure, and to thus base education on purposeful acts would identify

1. Kilpatrick, W. H., "The Project Method", P. 4.
2. Kilpatrick, W. H., "The Project Method", P. 6.

the process of education with worthy living itself. Indeed it is this assumption that underlies Kilpatrick's position and gives meaning and significance to the conception of the project as a unit of worthy living.

a. Utilization of Effective Learning Conditions

It is held that this view has great promise for education in that it utilizes the conditions under which learning most effectively takes place. What are those conditions? According to Kilpatrick the answer is to be found in the "laws of learning" as set forth by Edward L. Thorndike, the educational psychologist. A brief summary of them is necessary for understanding the support of the position under consideration.[1]

(1) The "Laws of Learning"

Back of all learning are the wants or desires of the learner. Learning is an active process, and before a child can learn anything, it must be aroused to action. "To secure learning we must have activity, and to secure activity some want must be alive. The most effective learning occurs when learning is the means of satisfying some want. A primary consideration, then, in all learning and teaching is the provision of a motive; of an energizing want, desire, or interest which will provide vigorous and whole-hearted activity." This preliminary principle is expressed by Thorndike and Gates in their "Elementary Principles of Education".[2]

Further, they held that any act is a matter of response to a particular situation; some responses are innate while others are acquired. This acquiring of responses is called learning. Now, in any situation,

1. Thorndike, Edward L.: Educational Psychology, Vol. II, Pp. 1-16
Thorndike, Edward L., and Gates, Arthur I.: Elementary Principles of Education, Chap. V.
Kilpatrick, William H.: "The Project Method", Teachers College Record, Vol. XIX, No. 4, Sept. 1918.
2. Thorndike and Gates: Elementary Principles of Education, Pp. 84-85.

a number of responses are possible; the individual tries them out, selects, rejects, according as the results give satisfaction or annoyance. He will tend to accept, to repeat, to learn, those responses or acts which give satisfaction, which fill some want; while he will tend to reject those acts which do not contribute to, or which interfere with the fulfillment of some want. This principle is termed the Law of Effect.

A second Law is that of Readiness, and may be stated thus: "When an individual is ready to act in a certain way, for him to act in that way is satisfying, and for him not to act in that way is annoying. Conversely, when an individual is not ready to act in a certain way, for him to act in that way is annoying."[1] Readiness refers to conditions at a given moment, and the intensity of that readiness may vary from time to time. Some tendencies are nearly always in readiness and can be counted on to furnish motivation. Other tendencies may be acquired, and we learn to expect to act in a certain way at a certain time.

Now, to make the most of the state of readiness for learning, it is necessary that we not only know child nature, but that we adapt our program to it. Professor Kilpatrick feels that it is here we often fail. In the degree that we do not adapt school work to child nature, he says, "We shall find it difficult to get readiness for our lessons, or to get in any high degree satisfaction from learning them. We are in danger of getting mostly annoyance."[2]

Of importance to readiness are the roles played by success and failure. Readiness for an activity cannot be secured unless a child can successfully function in that activity. A pupil will not show an interest

1. Thorndike and Gates: Elementary Principles of Education, P. 89.
2. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 61.

in an activity which brings only difficulty and failure. This implies that a child must have enough capacity for the activities involved to bring continued satisfaction from success. On the other hand, readiness for an activity often waits upon the development of ability-habits. "Readiness does not always precede the acquisition of ability; it often follows and depends on ability. It is really a state of readiness of the abilities acquired. Abilities cannot get into a state of readiness before they exist."[1]

A third Law of Learning is that of Exercise. Simply stated it is that the individual tends to repeat and to make permanent those responses which have been satisfying, and conversely, to let fall into disuse, or eliminate, those responses which have not been accompanied by satisfaction.

Professor Kilpatrick believes that the "purposeful act" utilizes these Laws of Learning; it is the purpose which provides the motive power or drive, which guides the process to its intended goal; and by the satisfaction of success fixes on the mind and character the successful steps which have been parts of the whole activity.[2]

(2) Primary and Concomitant Learnings

Kilpatrick holds that the project has a further influence on effective learning. Any learning situation involves not only the building up of responses which will achieve the end in view, but also the developing of attitudes and feelings toward that activity. For example in learning to type, a person builds up the mechanical habits of using a typewriter; these are primary learnings. But the person is also developing attitudes toward typing; what is his purpose in learning to type? Is it genuine

1. Thorndike and Gates: Elementary Principles of Education, P. 91.
2. Kilpatrick, W. H.: "The Project Method" P. 9.

or enforced? What is his attitude toward the teacher? One of respect or hostility? These secondary responses Kilpatrick terms concomitant learnings. We cannot escape this complex response in life-situations, and it is desirable that the total response be as satisfying to the individual as possible.[1] It is in the realm of the concomitant learnings that much of the trend of the individual's development is determined,--whether his present activity brings satisfaction, whether he looks forward to, and engages in, new learning experiences which attract him.

For example, a little girl is taking violin lessons. She is carrying out her mother's wish that one member of the family play the violin, but she herself hasn't a strong desire to play. The child's mistakes always draw attention, but praise is seldom given. Hearing an accomplished violinist play, the little girl thinks that perhaps she might be able to do that someday, only to be told that the future of a concert artist would not be permitted for her. Now, the child learns to finger and bow, to reproduce the notes read from the music score: these we term primary learnings. But she is also learning to dislike the violin, even music itself. Finding little satisfaction in its performance, she has no desire to continue, and as soon as possible, she stops playing. These are concomitant learnings, and in this case, of an undesirable nature. The story might be told differently,--of violin playing as an interest of the child, attended by successful performance and encouragement for the fullest development possible. The differences would lie in the attitudes and feelings, what we have called concomitants.

Kilpatrick believes that in whole-hearted, purposeful activities that we can get not only whatever primary learning is needed, but at the same time the most wholesome concomitants. "When children work successfully

1. ibid, P. 9

at purposeful activities which challenge their powers, they almost certainly build favorable attitudes (concomitants) toward everything that entered helpfully into the process.[1] Again, it is the purpose which furnishes the drive to action; the attitude of whole-heartedness which reaches out to include everything and everyone that contributes to realization of the goal, insuring the most desirable by-products.

b. Contribution to Social and Moral Education

There is still another argument for the project method, and that is its contribution to moral education. Because the "purposeful act" finds its best expression in a social environment, for the same reason, it provides an admirable means for developing ethical values. "Moral Character", claims Kilpatrick, "is primarily an affair of shared social relationships, the disposition to determine one's conduct and attitudes with reference to the group."[2] Here again, the underlying conception is the identifying of education with life, the belief that one learns through living, that character is built in present life-situations. There is, therefore, the necessity for living in a variety of social situations, which will give children an opportunity to exercise judgment and discrimination, to build up ideals and standards. Children have many social interests, but here competent supervision and the guidance of the skilled teacher is required that they (the children) may "build the ideals necessary for approved social life". There is a vast difference, however, between the situation in which the teacher hands down and enforces "rules ", and one in which pupils and teacher form standards for living together. The difference is evidenced in the attitude of the pupils toward such a regime; they will accept and abide by

1. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 134.
2. Kilpatrick, W. H.: "The Project Method", P. 134.

decisions which their own group has made, but react with hostility toward an imposed authority. A program built on the purposeful activities of pupils offers this variety of life-experiences and the opportunity for their ethical evaluation. In the next chapter will be included several instances of the moral education values of the project method.

This is but a limited sketch of Professor Kilpatrick's argument for the project method; we shall find frequent occasion to refer to his position in the remainder of the paper. For the present, let us turn to some of the implications of this method, both as regards educational theory and the practical matter of curriculum building.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT METHOD

a. The Emphasis on the Child

"The child is the starting point, the center, the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard. To the growth of the child, all studies are subservient; they are instruments valued as they serve the needs of growth. Personality, character, is more than subject-matter. Not knowledge or information, but self-realization is the goal. Literally, we must take our stand with the child and our departure from him. It is he and not the subject matter which determines the quality and quantity of learning."[1]

These words of John Dewey might be taken as a text for the project method. For it is belief in the child, in his experiences and his possibilities which prompts the search for a unit of learning, such as Kilpatrick proposes in the "purposeful act". Believing that in the child's own interests may be found the key to successful learning, the next step is to formulate a means for using them for the child's best

1. John Dewey, The Child and the Curriculum, quoted by Stanwood Cobb, The New Leaven, P. 13.

development. As Dewey indicates, such a view involves a new attitude toward subject matter, and it is a long way from seeing subject matter as an end, (to be learned chiefly through memorization), to seeing it as a means to aiding the child to self-realization.

(1) A curriculum built on children's interests

If our educational program is to be built on the child's interests and purposes, it follows that we must know what those interests are, and secondly, to know how these may be stimulated, guided and directed so as to bring growing. A thorough study of child nature is a necessary preparation; we must know children's capacities, and the point of development which they have reached. Professor Kilpatrick points out that not all ages can purpose with equal wisdom and clearness, but that each for his own age can put heart and soul into his sort of activities. "Each by exercising whatever degree of development he has will best carry himself forward to the next stage."[1] And to those who find children's present interests limited and mediocre, his answer is: "You must start where they are; there is nowhere else to start. You must try to move them up the line to something finer."[2]

At this point it will be interesting to present the view of Ellsworth Collings, a teacher who has been influenced by Professor Kilpatrick's position, and who has sought to carry the project method into practice. He would start with the actual present life of boys and girls, with all their interests and desires, good and bad. The first step, he holds, is to help guide the children to choose the most interesting and most fruitful parts of this life as the content of their school activity.

1. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 129.
2. Ibid. P. 197.

Beyond this, the aim is to help boys and girls to do better than they otherwise would, the precise things they had chosen. Secondly, by means of the experience of choosing and through the experience of more effectual activity, gradually to broaden the outlook of the boys and girls as to what they might further choose, and then to help them better effect their new choices. Collings believes that this is a gradual and continuous process, this enlarging of power and outlook. But he would always stay within the things that boys and girls like to do then and there, feeling that this promises most for the present and for the future.[1]

The question of staying within the interests of the child has been one of the most discussed points of the project method. Kilpatrick allows for stirring of interests that otherwise would lie dormant, provided that they are not in advance of the child's present abilities.[2] A similar position has been taken by one of the most progressive schools of the east (the City and Country School of New York City), that while all avenues of life are open to children, by virtue of their living in a complex world, some of the openings to these avenues are obscured so that children fail to make an entrance without help.[3]

b. Selection of Projects

(1) Co-operation of Teachers and Pupils

While allowing for the teacher's suggestions, for "stimulating interests present but not evident to the children", Kilpatrick stresses the pupils' part in determining the activities which form their program. If the child is to learn best, the child is to do the purposing. "Our plan is primarily that a child shall wish what he does, that he have, and

1. Collings, Ellsworth: An Experiment with a Project Curriculum, preface.
2. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 146.
3. Bulletin of the City and Country School, 1927-1928

put soul and purpose into that he does. The suggestion might come from the teacher, and the child could still purpose the matter in this sense. The question is, does the child whole-heartedly accept and adopt the teacher's suggestion."[1]

It should be pointed out that the teacher should be fully alive to the desirability of accepting the children's own suggestions, and using them for their educative possibilities. Also, she may make a careful study of the needs and interests of the pupils, and her suggestions may be so based on this knowledge that they find a whole-hearted response from the children. As is indicated, the most desirable situation would be a co-operative selection of projects by pupils and teacher; each contributing suggestions, the final choice based on the respective merits of the proposals. That choice should be made by the pupils; when it is their own, they accept responsibility for it, and their whole-hearted support is enlisted. The teacher may hold the power of veto, but she will use it only after careful thought.[2]

It must be recognized, however, that there are certain dangers at the point of "teacher suggestion". For if the teacher always suggests, the pupils lose the opportunity to exercise initiative. Then, too, the teacher may be tempted to offer her suggestions first, or to present them in such a manner, that the pupils accept them without exploring their own interests. In this way, they again lose the chance to develop originality, responsibility, and independence. To the extent that the teachers suggestions contribute to this hampering, they violate the project principle.

(2) Guiding Principles in the Choice of Projects

The child is active, and has many interests, many wants. It

1. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 207.
2. Collings, Ellsworth: An Experiment with a Project Curriculum, preface.

is clear that only a few can be followed and satisfied. This is particularly true when interests are related to school procedure, and we are faced with the matter of choice. Some criteria are necessary for guidance.

Professor Kilpatrick suggests that in the choice of activities or projects, that they should enlist the child's whole-heartedness, his "interested willingness"; that they should fit his abilities; and that, while the enterprise begins and remains within the child's interest, that it "should still always reach out beyond the past achievement of the child", and so, challenge growth.[1] The project should bring satisfaction to the child through its accomplishment, but it should also create in him the desire to go on in similar and related activities. In satisfaction, he should still be unsatisfied. Professor Kilpatrick's own words best express this principle: "The richness of life is seen upon reflection to depend, in a large measure at least, upon the tendency of what one does to suggest and prepare for succeeding activities. Any activity--beyond the barest physical want--which does not thus 'lead on' becomes in time stale and flat. Such 'leading on' means that the individual has been modified so that he sees what before he did not see or does what before he could not do. But this is exactly to say that the activity has had an educative effect..... We may assert that the richness of life depends exactly on its tendency to lead one on to other like fruitful activity; that the degree of this tendency consists exactly in the educative effect of the activity involved; and that we may therefore take as a criterion of the value of any activity--whether intentionally educative or not--its tendency directly or indirectly to lead the individual

1. Kilpatrick, W. H.: Foundations of Method, P. 150.

and others whom he touches on to other like fruitful activity."[1] The expression "activity leading on to further activity" has become widely associated with Kilpatrick's view; to the writer, this is one of the best statemnets of the position embodied in that phrase.

One of the most note-worthy attempts to build a curriculum upon children's interests is being carried on at the Lincoln School in New York City. After ten years of experimenting, the staff of the elementary division of the School published a report of their program. In a chapter entitled "Criteria for Selecting Units" we are given the principles by which activities are chosen. (It should be noted that the term "unit of work" is used rather than "project". A brief explanation shows the fundamental likeness of the underlying conception: "The unit of work means the larger learning situations which draw upon all phases of experience and make use of all kinds of subject matter.")[2] It would seem from certain references in the report that the "unit of work" might include more than one "project" or "purposeful act", that it was, in fact, but a larger measure embodying the same principles.

Because the criteria given relate theory and experience so closely, it is thought desirable to enumerate them here.

I. "The unit of work must be selected from real life situations and must be considered worth while by the child because he feels that he has helped select it and because he finds in it many opportunities to satisfy his needs."[3]

"The real life situation may be one which the child or group suggests

1. Kilpatrick, W. H.: "The Project Method", P. 12.
2. Lincoln Elementary School Staff: Curriculum Making in an Elementary School, P. 29.
3. ibid, Pp. 31-34.

because of past experiences or present needs, or it may be chosen because of the teacher's presentation, or because the setting of the stage has made it seem worth while to the pupils". But no unit should be chosen if the materials for carrying it out are not available.

II. "The unit of work must afford many opportunities for real purposing and real projects, and it will be something which the child can carry into his normal activity."

e.g., The unit on transportation in the fifth grade gives the opportunity to collect exhibits of boats and of engines and to show the evolution of the wheel. In the city there are many kinds of transportation, and the pupils will see all of them and make reports about them. They will make models of boats, of trains, of wagons. They will plan a frieze for their classroom showing the evolution of transportation from primitive to modern times.

III. "The unit of work must stimulate many kinds of activities and so provide for individual differences."

Each child should feel that his activity is contributing to the whole, and he should not be allowed too soon to become a specialist in any one field.

IV. a. "The unit of work must make individual growth possible."

b. "The succession of units of work must provide for continuous group growth from one level to the next."

"Ideally no unit of work should represent the end of individual or class curiosity. An important phase of the teacher's technique is to leave each unit with the feeling that there is a fascinating field for further investigation which neither the individual nor the whole group has yet touched. This creates an attitude for continuous individual and group growth."

V. "Each unit of work must furnish leads into other related units of work and must stimulate in the child the desire for a continued widening of his interests and understandings."

A unit of work which is narrow in its applications will be considered less worthy of group effort than one which not only stimulates many kinds of activities but also leads the child to discover interests and possibilities that invite him to go on to other fields.

VI. "Each unit of work must help meet the demands of society and must help clarify social meanings."

"It is not enough that any unit relate closely to the present needs of the child or to real life situations. It must make the child more alert to his social environment and help him to understand the meanings of adult society in which he is to have a part."

VII. "Each unit of work must be accompanied by progress in the use of such tool subjects as contribute to that unit."

Certain skills are necessary to the successful realization of most activities. The skills which are developed as a part of the enterprise are felt to be more lasting because learned in connection with actual doing.

VIII. "Each unit of work must lead to the development of desirable habits."

The child must find in the unit the possibilities for growth in personal and group responsibility, initiative, co-operation, good judgment, power to plan ahead, open-mindedness, fair play, creativeness, self-direction, sympathy and kindliness.

The likeness of the viewpoint expressed in these criteria to the position of Professor Kilpatrick is obvious. The fundamentals are essentially the same, the guiding principles are but extended and formulated for application to school procedure.

In any attempt to practice the project method, certain criteria are essential for project selection. They may vary somewhat in different situations, depending on what is desired from the group or institution; for example, a day school might stress certain experiences more than a church school. However, there would also be fundamental likenesses, such as an attempt to meet the real needs of children, and to provide for increasing growth.

c. The Use of Subject Matter

One of the most pertinent questions arising from a consideration of the project method concerns the place of subject matter. What happens to the curriculum based on "subjects"? With the project curriculum, subject matter becomes a means in place of an end; a means for carrying out enterprises, coming in at the point where it is felt to be needed. For example, reading is taught not as a "subject", but as a means for getting desired information about some question of interest. A mastery of numbers becomes necessary in buying materials, or in measurement connected with construction, and arithmetic comes in as a part of the project. How other people have lived and met life-problems is involved in other projects, and creates the need for a knowledge of history, social science and geography. Knowledge is thus related to the interests and actual experiences of children.

This viewpoint involves a changed conception of education; instead of measuring education by the acquiring of facts, it is conceived as a process of acquiring powers, skills, and mastery of the tools of learning. Factual knowledge is still important, but it is not considered of first importance. The ability to ascertain, to evaluate and to use facts is held to have much greater worth.

A number of problems are raised by this position, and in the limits of this study, they can be considered only briefly.

One of these is the question whether subject matter shall be given only at the "point of need", and whether a mastery of essential techniques can be acquired in following this method. This is a question involving practice and experimentation. In Ellsworth Collings' experiment, the children learned what was needed for specific purposes. He did not care whether they got the conventional subject-matter of the schools. He held that if they needed it, it would be called for and learned; if it would be needed later, it should be learned later. It should be added that the children included in his experiment made a high score when tested on various achievement tests with children who had followed the orthodox curriculum.[1]

In several of the progressive schools, Lincoln School in New York City for example, the plan of using subject material and developing techniques as they are needed, is supplemented by direct teaching in some fundamental subjects, and in others not included in projects. These are planned to be related, as far as possible, with children's life-experiences. In each grade achievement tests are used, and when a child is below a recognized standard rating, special attention is given at that point.

Incidentally, it will be seen that here is a significant factor in project selection,--the range of subject-matter and the techniques involved in any proposed enterprise. Careful planning and guidance should provide for increasing mastery of knowledge and skills.

Another question which is closely related to the first is the amount of factual knowledge that is necessary for the child to acquire.

1. Collings, Ellsworth: An Experiment with a Project Curriculum.

Through a long period in the history of education, emphasis was placed on the learning (chiefly through memorizing) of facts, logically arranged, but often unrelated to life-experiences. Now, a changed viewpoint considers this type of education as undesirable,--it is ineffective and it is inadequate. For it must be realized that the scientific research of the past decades, and the great advance on all fronts of learning has made the acquiring of much factual knowledge a gigantic task. How much any one can acquire is infinitesimal compared with the amount that might be acquired. Again, every day brings modifications of present facts and the discovery of new, so that yesterday's "facts" may be discounted tomorrow. If we are to effectively educate for this "changing civilization" our emphasis must be less on facts and more on methods of ascertaining and using facts; on methods of research, so that the individual will be able to solve his problems by bringing to bear upon them the results of previous experiments and to push on to new efforts.

A third problem concerns the presentation of subject-matter. Textbooks must be revised; there must be a reorganization of the material from the standpoint of the child and an adaptation to his interests and needs. There is needed an elimination of unnecessary material, and a simplification of that which is presented, with an approach which is within the understanding and experience of children. This revision of textbooks is making rapid strides, not only in public schools, but also in religious education organizations. A whole chapter might be written on this movement and all that it signifies.

d. The Place of the Teacher

The project method involves a changed relationship for teacher and pupils. The gap which has to often existed between them is bridged by a spirit of co-operation. The teacher retains her leadership but it is

expressed in new ways. With the children, she is an older member of their group, one who is a little more experienced. But she does not push forward because of that further experience. She often stays in the background, and lets the children try their budding powers as far as possible. She sees that it is better even for the children to make some mistakes and learn through them than for her to guard the group too carefully against all false steps and imperfect work.

Instead of assigning "lessons" and following a stereotyped, set-up-in-advance program, the teacher is most concerned in helping the children carry out their own plans. The place of the teacher in the selection of projects has already been indicated. The teacher seeks first to ascertain the present interests and felt needs of the children; her own suggestions may be added to theirs for consideration; at times, she must be ready to furnish an entire plan. In the project selection she helps the children to see the consequences of alternate plans, so that their choice may be intelligent. Her function at this stage is that of stimulation and guidance. When the project has been chosen, then it becomes the teacher's part to help the children follow it out. She wishes the enterprise to be as educative as possible, and seeks to reveal all its possibilities to her pupils. This kind of teaching requires a great deal of ability, and often an experiment with the project method falters at just this point. John Dewey recognizes the importance of the teacher when he says: "The question is often asked, if you begin with the child's ideas, impulses and interests all so crude, so random and scattering, so little refined or spiritualized, how is he to get the necessary discipline, culture and information?" The answer is, "you must direct the child's activities and lead them to the necessary goals. It requires a very high type of person to direct the child in activities as much as possible

of the child's own choice and aid it in securing worthwhile results." And again, "if you simply indulge this (the child's) interest by letting the child go on indefinitely, there is no growth that is more than accidental. But let the child first express his impulse and then through criticism, question and suggestion, bringing him to consciousness of what he has done and what he needs to do and the result is quite different."[1]

The teacher must ~~just~~ first believe in the child and in his abilities and possibilities. Unless there is this confidence in the child, and respect for his desires and needs, it would be vain to attempt to build a curriculum on his interests.

The teacher must be ever on the alert, responsive to the children, sensing their needs, providing material when necessary, answering questions, raising new problems. Always she is concerned that both as individuals and as a group, her children may realize their highest possibilities.

While a great deal is required of the teacher in insight, mental energy, and resourcefulness, she is relieved from the necessity of "knowing everything". She is no longer in the position of an all-wise authority from whom knowledge must be handed down. The teacher is willing to admit "I don't know", and she realizes that the children respect her sincerity.

She must guard against an attitude of superiority and condescension. Let the teacher give the impression that the children's efforts are inferior to what she can do, that her knowledge is much greater than theirs, and she will lose her chance to be their comrade on the road to learning. For these things are the enemies of frank, self-revealing child-nature, they are like cold winds to opening flowers. Respect for childhood must go along

1. Quoted by Stanwood Cobb: The New Leaven, Pp. 238-239.

with love and sympathy to provide an atmosphere in which children can develop freely.

e. The Necessity for Freedom

In a program built upon children's interests, we must allow freedom to follow those interests. First, freedom of movement, because children's interests are active interests, and a project involving individual effort may call for considerable moving about. In the classroom, this means getting away from the old sit-in-you-chair situation; it means freedom to confer with teacher and classmates, freedom to leave the room in search of material for an enterprise, and a measure of working space to use those materials necessary for the task. To the person who is accustomed to put a premium upon a quiet, orderly classroom, this freedom of movement seems to mean nothing but noise and confusion. But if one spends a morning with such a group, having eyes and ears open, what appears at first as confusion reveals itself as the busyness of construction, and the children are intent in carrying out certain plans. All of their energies are centered upon enterprises which have value and meaning for them, and one almost envies that wholehearted endeavor.

A project may involve a great deal of activity, and the amount of activity-freedom which can be permitted in any situation is a factor to be taken into account. In the selection of projects, limitations of space and equipment will eliminate certain plans. It is important to consider such limitations at the very origination of a plan, for to have an individual or group begin a project and then have to abandon it, would tend to dissatisfaction, and therefore be undesirable in educative influence.

Furthermore, if children are following individual projects, there will be occasions when one child's activity will hinder the work of another child, or of the group. For example, the small boy who is building a packing-box house, because of his hammering may be annoying to the group having a reading lesson. Frequently the class will frame its own rule for these situations, and consideration for others may be expressed in terms such as: "You can have all the fun you like until it disturbs other people." In the situation given above, the little boy would be asked to work more quietly, or to do something else until after the reading lesson. "As much freedom as can be used wisely" is Kilpatrick's view; at times the teacher will need to decide the degree, but if the teacher and class are working together, that judgment will more often be co-operative. There is value, too, in that group decision, for the child tends to obey more willingly a rule which he has had a part in making.

In addition to freedom of movement, there should also be intellectual freedom; freedom to inquire, to explore, to differ. Whole worlds for exploration beckon the questing spirit of the child, but too often that adventuresomeness has been checked at the first evidence of it. According to Stanwood Cobb, "Every child wants to know a multitude of things he does not know. It is because adults have so hedged him about by external demands that this desire to want to know has been abolished in our modern schoolroom. The child must be free, also, to take time to think. Children are told to read the textbook and give back the information to the teacher. That isn't thinking; that's simply answering. Thinking is finding out something from an impulse that is within you, and that makes a demand upon you."[1]

The child must be free to reach a decision which differs from

1. Stanwood Cobb, The New Leaven, P. 65.

that of the teacher. This is a freedom which teachers often find difficult to grant, for they feel that their judgments should have more weight than children's, since their experience is more mature. However, when emphasis is put on the child's growth, upon his development in powers of initiative and independent thinking, and his progress toward maturity in thought and action, conformity of opinion becomes relatively insignificant. But to one writer and educator, "it is not enough to allow a difference of opinion to be stated. The teacher must be neither supercilious nor condescending. A child's world is a very real world, and its thoughts are earnest thoughts; they should be given our sincere attention and sympathy. Perhaps we can help them to find better ideas. Perhaps we cannot. At any rate, we must see to it that the child is free to formulate its own ideas; giving it material for thought but not dogmas."[1]

In this last sentence is the clue to the teacher's position:--to give material, to point out the consequences of this or that decision, to see that judgments are made on the basis of adequate evidence, on sound premises,--and then to encourage the habit of independent decision. Now the teacher's viewpoint may be one factor in reaching a decision, but it is desirable that when given, it should be presented as objectively as possible, so that the teacher's personality and unconscious persuasion will not overweight it. Whenever it can be managed, the final decision should rest with the child, that he may exercise his ability to choose and thus grow in independence.

1. Ibid. P. 81.

CHAPTER II

THE PROJECT IN PRACTICE

Some Experiments with the Project Method.

1. INTRODUCTION

The project method finds an eager and interested response from many a teacher, who is dissatisfied with older teaching methods, and who earnestly desires a fuller development of the latent abilities of her pupils than she has heretofore been able to achieve. A curriculum based on pupils' own interests and experiences! What possibilities that might afford for teacher as well as pupils, in co-operative relationships, in freedom of thought and expression, in growth in individual and social experience! However, no matter how much this approach might promise, it is often difficult for a teacher to break away from older methods and to experiment with new. With the theory of the project, she will concur, but in practice she hesitates. Could she see how other teachers are experimenting, learn something of what has been done, perhaps this would give a measure of confidence in beginning a similar effort. The experience of others would act both as confirmation and stimulation. It was a thought such as this which prompted one teacher to spend some time in visiting and observing several progressive schools. The results of this observation form part of the substance of this chapter. The writer also drew upon recorded experiments from several sources; for example, access was given to the weekly diary reports of teachers in the Union School of Religion, while the publications of the Lincoln School and the City and Country School proved helpful. All of the illustrative material presented is based upon actual experiences.

In regard to the material gathered in visiting schools, it should be said that whenever possible, the observer talked with the teachers; this aided in explaining the work of the group as well as the viewpoint of the teacher, while misconceptions of the observer were at times corrected by these conferences. Again, long periods for observation were preferred, when one could remain through a morning's program with a group. If the period were short, a second visit was made. It is difficult to get an adequate picture of a group's activity or project in a brief visit. When the observer lives through an entire session with the children, there is less danger of hasty judgments, and much more chance for complete understanding.

2. WAYS OF ORGANIZING THE PROJECT CURRICULUM

In studying experiments with the project method, one finds a variety of practices, and these are nowhere more noticeable than in the organizing of the curriculum. One finds differences not only between schools but also within schools, a situation which reflects the present experimental nature of this method. Furthermore, it is just at this point of organization that the interested teacher raises the question of applying the project principle,--how <u>can</u> the year's program be planned with this method? Among the several ways of organizing the curriculum utilizing the project, the following are found to be practised:

(1) developing all the activities and interests of the year about one centralizing theme and making most of the work contributory to it;

(2) utilizing a succession of short units (projects) which may or may not be related to each other, each occupying the attention of the class for a few weeks or months;

(3) utilizing a number of short units (projects) running simultaneously

throughout the year, and which may or may not be related to each other;

(4) utilizing one rich central unit (project) and permitting the development of an indefinite number of small units (projects) suggested by the main interest or by new interests which the children may discover later;

(5) supplementing these methods of organizing the year-program by the addition of specific subjects of study, periods set aside for the pursuit of history, mathematics, and so on, entirely unrelated to any of the units (projects) carried on.[1]

According to Harold Rugg of the Lincoln School, New York City, any one or all of these methods may be found in use in one child-centered school during the course of a year, and he believes that "no one method seems as yet to have proved its superiority".

In many schools the project has been used not so much as the starting point and basis of the program, but rather as a means for bringing interest and vitality to the older academic or traditional curriculum. Indeed, Stanwood Cobb in "The New Leaven" claims that in most of the new schools, "The project is not used to displace the curriculum, but to energize it and transform its nature. A curricular structure is maintained, but the various subjects are taught in such a way as to give opportunity for creativeness on the part of the child. As far as possible the academic work is connected with real life-needs which become centers of interest for the child."[2]

The adaptation of the project method sometimes comes in for severe

1. Rugg and Shumaker: The Child-Centered School, P. 92.
2. Cobb, Stanwood: The New Leaven, P. 194.

criticism. The project has often been used as a means for "putting over" subject material which would otherwise be uninteresting to children. The position is that certain subjects are to be taught, and if the project offers a way of teaching them more effectively, then it is a welcome aid. It is felt that this type of veneering merits criticism, for it reflects a position that is essentially subject-centered, and as such, is foreign to the project principle, which places the development of the child as having first and greatest importance.

In experimenting with the project method, the direction which the curriculum for any school or class may take, may be influenced by a number of factors. The freedom of the teacher or school to experiment with new methods may be limited by the demands of parents that traditional subjects be taught in traditional ways. Again, the lack of trained teachers, or the limitation of equipment may determine the degree of experimentation. These are very real conditions, and frequently they influence not only the beginning of an experiment, but also affect its ultimate success or failure. The importance of these conditioning factors will be brought out more clearly as we proceed with the illustrative material.

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS OBSERVED

The schools which were observed in this study represent a number of differences, and at this point, a brief description of each school is desirable, so that references to actual experiences may have more significant meaning. It will be noted that the list includes private day schools and church schools. While the writer had particular interest in the latter, the day schools commanded attention because of their progress in experimentation. In this chapter, material is drawn freely from both sources; in the concluding chapter, the emphasis will be upon the project in religious education.

a. The City and Country School, New York

The City and Country School in New York City, is a private day school, which, since its founding in 1913, has consistently sought to practice progressive educational methods. It represents a most significant attempt to evolve a type of education based on the child and his development. The fundamental position held is that "children neither can be taught nor trained to grow--favorable conditions for growth only can be furnished". In terms of the school the aim is "to be a vital part of the environment of each child while he grows; to study him; to meet his intrinsic requirements in such a way that his growth will not be restricted in any one direction, while he carries on the things in which he is interested; to furnish conditions for growth, taking care that the 'appetite' of the individual child must be considered or he will not attack them."[1]

An interesting feature of the City and Country School is that children are grouped chronologically; there are age groups for each year from 3-12 years--inclusive.

The year's program for each group centers about a leading project which serves as a focus for individual and group activity. History, geography, literature, etc., all are related to this central enterprise or organizing activity. This leading project may suggest other projects, either for the group or for individuals. The central activity is carefully chosen so that there is a sequence of subject matter in certain subjects held to be essential.

Teachers and pupils have a great deal of freedom in developing their programs, while one of the most encouraging features is the way in which teachers and pupils work together.

1. Bulletin of the City and Country School 1927-1928, P. 3.

b. The Lincoln School, New York

The Lincoln School is officially connected with Teachers College, Columbia University. For over a decade it has held a prominent place as a school which is seeking to improve teaching methods and materials. It has been particularly concerned with experimenting with a curriculum which would be adapted to the changed conditions of modern society. In teaching this has meant an emphasis on, and utilization of, the experiences and problems of the children in the world in which they find themselves; with subject material it has involved a reinterpretation of knowledge in terms of human needs. Furthermore, unnatural lines of division between allied fields of knowledge needed to be broken down, and in many cases a "substitution of human episodes for the rehearsal of bare facts." Attitudes of students toward subject material have not been overlooked, and there has been an encouragement of independent conclusions and the testing of the validity of data and viewpoints.

While the main emphasis of the school has been on scientific curriculum making, to evolve a curriculum closely related to the needs of modern society,[1] certain of the elementary grades are experimenting with free activity, with attention to work and play construction, field trips, and problems arising from the experiences of the children. Several of the grades have year-projects and projects extending over a period of several weeks.

Field work is an essential part of the activities of each grade, while assemblies are used to present material in vivid form, and to make real class activities, each program bearing a relation to what the children are doing. The importance of pupil participation is fully recognized, and

1. de Lima, Agnes: Our Enemy the Child, P. 144.

a definite attempt is made to enlist that contribution in ways that represent real interests of the children.

c. Ethical Culture School, New York

Dr. Felix Adler first started the Ethical Culture School as a kindergarten, but it soon expanded into a fully graded school. Compared with the City and Country and Lincoln Schools, it is much more conservative, and follows the conventional curriculum more closely. However, the School may truly be termed progressive, for it has emphasized improved methods of teaching, and, like Lincoln School, it has advocated changes in the curriculum to prepare children more adequately for a modern world.

For several years, the School has experimented in the primary grades with progressive educational methods, testing particularly that theory which conceives of education as an organic process which changes as the child develops. Considerable freedom has been given in the selection of material, in the use of time, and the employment of special teachers. The aim has been "to create a free social environment where children in cooperation with others the same age might make a beginning in democratic living under conditions more like life than commonly considered appropriate for the school régime".[1]

Children as well as teachers are at liberty to move about freely, and to talk, so long as they do not disturb others. The teacher directs the class when necessary, but the children are mainly engaged upon projects of their own.

The curriculum is based on constructive work and play, and it is aimed to give a first hand knowledge of social and industrial activities related to the child's life. Reading, writing and arithmetic

1. de Lima, Agnes: Our Enemy the Child, P. 129.

are taught when the interest of the children is aroused.

This freer type of curriculum includes the first four grades. In the higher grades, the program while more conventional, allows for freedom of individual expression in various creative activities.

d. The Union School of Religion, New York

The Union School of Religion, New York City, connected with the Department of Religious Education of Union Theological Seminary, has been one of the most fruitful experiments in the field of religious education. Under the wing of the Department of Religious Education, and with the leadership of an able Director, it has drawn largely on the Seminary students in religious education for its teaching staff. Having no official connection with the Seminary, and without denominational attachments, the Union School of Religion has had unusual freedom to experiment with educational methods. Over a period of several years it has consistently endeavored to carry the project principle into practice. It should be added that the pupils, for the most part, are boys and girls attending the Lincoln, Horace Mann, and Ethical Culture Schools, and are therefore familiar with experimental methods. A tuition fee is paid by the Union School of Religion pupils, and the teaching staff receive salaries, a factor which is probably influential in securing better trained teachers. Meeting on Sunday morning for a three hour period from 9:00 to 12:00, the School has had an added advantage in this longer time for a more extended program.

e. First Presbyterian Church School, East Orange, New Jersey

The First Presbyterian Church of East Orange, N.J., was designated as "average church" by one of its members. It is a church in a residential suburb, established for some sixty years, and in that period

has made changes of equipment and program as needs for expansion have arisen. For the past ten years the Church has grown increasingly aware of itself as an educational institution, and its program of religious education extends into all departments and activities. However, this has been a gradual development, guided by an unusually capable Director of Religious Education, and in recent time, aided by a well-trained Director of Elementary Work.

In the Church School, there has been a persistent search for the best curriculum material available, an emphasis on trained teachers, and a willingness to experiment with teaching methods. The curriculum as a whole does not follow the project method, but the project has been frequently used as a means for relating subject material to the children's own experiences and interests. From a program based solidly on subject-matter-to-be-learned, there has been a definite progression to one which recognizes the development of the child as central. The child's needs and problems are studied carefully and kept to the fore in planning the curriculum. The present program represents a transition stage both in teaching method and material, and it was this situation which particularly appealed to the observer.

f. The Park Avenue Baptist Church School, New York

The Park Avenue Baptist Church is a city church whose membership includes people living in widely separated districts. Not neighborhood proximity but spiritual congeniality is the uniting bond. The religious education program of the Church is given an important place by its members and whole-heartedly supported by them. A Director of Religious Education and a Director of the Elementary Department guide the program; the teaching staff of the Church School is carefully selected, and the teachers receive salaries.

There appears to be considerable freedom to experiment with new methods and materials. In the Junior Department, where the observer gave the most attention, the project was used as a teaching aid rather than as the starting point of the curriculum. To elaborate: From observation and interviews, the impression was gained that the emphases of the curriculum were:

(1) A concern that a rich heritage of Biblical literature and religious history become the possession of the children; that this material be interpreted in the light of modern Biblical and historical research; and that it be presented to the children in terms which they could understand and appreciate.

(2) An enlistment through study and activity in problems concerning present-day religious experience, particularly with regard to enlarging social vision.

With these emphases, the project was used as a means for relating material and activities to children's interests and enlisting children's active participation in the program. This use is similar to the plan at the East Orange Church, and both represent a modification of the project method.

In addition to the observations drawn from those six schools, a few illustrations are included from other schools and class situations, which will be designated as the experiences are related.

4. DISCOVERING INTERESTS

Of all the problems involved in the project method, none is more important, and at the same time more difficult than the discovering of interests,--of individuals and groups. It is <u>important</u> because the theory of the project centers about the interests of the individuals concerned,--it is both the starting point and the basis for continuance.

And it is a difficult problem in actual practice to find out what those interests are; first, because individuals frequently are inarticulate about their interests and needs, and secondly, because expressed interests often turn out to be substitutes for real interests which are not readily disclosed. A further problem is involved in group activity,--in discovering interests which are common to the members, and then to guide in the selection of one that will promise most for individual and group life.

Interests are neither quickly nor easily discovered, and in a failure to find out children's real interests, there is a danger that adults will impose their own interests on children, and claim the result as a project experiment. This, it must be admitted, is a common fault. It is recognized, however, that under certain conditions, the teacher's plan may represent the children's interests. To find out what these conditions are is in itself a problem.

These are some of the questions regarding interest discovery which confront those who would take the project method seriously.

There have been a number of experiments in this field, and many more are in process. In this study, it is proposed to describe some ways that are being tried in discovering interests.

a. Intensive Study of Children's Behavior

(1) The Use of Diary Records

Many teachers and youth leaders hold that if one wants to know what children's interests are, that the most rewarding approach is to study children's behavior,--to watch, to look, and to listen to all that children say and do. An interesting experiment of such an intensive study is told by Miss Acheson in her book "The Construction of Junior

Church School Curricula".[1]

Teaching a class of Juniors in a Church School, Miss Acheson kept a diary record of each group meeting, including class sessions, field trips, and "good times". She noted what was said, how it was said, and the behavior of the children as individuals and in group activity. She encouraged the children to tell of everyday happenings at home, in school, and at play. She noted the subjects that came up in this free conversation, and she sought to get a picture of each child and his environment, and the forces which were influencing his thought and action. In addition, she was able to get the children to write up reports of different class activities, and this gave a further glimpse of what the children considered important to report, and also their attitudes toward people and events. There was an alertness to discover individual behavior problems, and to observe interests both directly and indirectly religious.

This study gave a wealth of information which was valuable in relating the church school program more closely to the children's needs; it also supported Miss Acheson's position that the religious education curricula now available fails to take into account a wide range of children's experiences.

A similar method has been used for several years at the Union School of Religion. Each teacher keeps a diary record of her class, the chief attention being given to the Sunday morning session. This is written up as soon as possible after the class meeting, while events and comments are still fresh in the teacher's mind. This record,

1. Acheson, Edna L.: The Construction of Junior Church School Curricula, Contributions to Education, No. 331 Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929

too, endeavors to relate all that was said and done in discussion, in play, and in behavior situations.

One of these diaries has recently been published in book form under the engaging title "Exploring Religion With Eight Year Olds". It is an exceedingly interesting and enlightening report of a year's teaching experience, based on following children's interests.[1]

The value of such a record is that it often reveals individual needs of children, while it describes the progress which the group has made, and discloses leads for further development.

A somewhat different plan was followed in the Junior Department of the Park Avenue Baptist Church. Shorthand notes were taken of the day's program at each Sunday morning session, together with children's comments in discussion and their suggestions.

If one might criticize this particular situation, it would be to say that the notebook was too much in evidence, and that the conspicuousness of the scribe might tend to self-consciousness on the part of the children.

(2) The Case Study

The case history, or case study, represents a more intensive study of children's behavior in terms of an individual child. Group activity is not overlooked, but it is a means for understanding an individual child, and the aim is to understand him and his needs,--individual and social. The study includes a discovery of the child's family relationships; the parent-child and child-parent attitudes; whether he is an only child, and if not, then his relationships with his brothers and sisters; and also his position and attitudes toward other members of the family circle. A study is made of the social and economic status of the family, and the family history since the child's birth. It should

1. Sweet, Helen F. and Fahs, Sophia L.: Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds. Henry Holt and Co., 1930.

be said that the cooperation of the parents is enlisted as an aid to more complete understanding. The child's physical development is carefully studied, including childhood illnesses. All hereditary factors which can be obtained are included.

The child's progress in school is ascertained, his intelligence rating, his abilities and difficulties. Also his behavior in the school group, in class and on the playground, his membership in school organizations and in neighborhood clubs and "gangs".

Such an intensive study is most rewarding in the insight which it gives into the child's needs, his interests, and his problems, and it discloses the complexity of the factors which influence the development of personality. Furthermore, the preparation of a case study helps one to see each child as an individual, with likenesses to other children, but with certain differences which should be taken into account as one seeks to aid his development.

> Every teacher at the Union School of Religion makes a case study each year of one of the children in her class. The reports are presented in staff meetings, and ways of helping the children are discussed. This adds considerably to the usefulness of the case study to the teacher.
>
> In Miss Acheson's experiment, she claimed that these individual studies were most helpful in revealing the children's needs. In her book she describes one case study in detail.[1]

This type of intensive study requires time, and it may be weeks or months before one can gather in all the significant factors. If the teacher has a large group, she can scarcely hope to make so thorough a study of each member. But, as has been indicated, a single case history

1. Acheson, Edna L.: The Construction of Junior Church School Curricula, Pp. 136-148.

carefully prepared, may throw a great deal of light on the behavior of other children. A particular value of these two types of study is that they are based on direct experience with children.

b. "Setting the Stage"

The interested teacher may inquire "Shall I first spend time in observing children's behavior, or make a case study, before attempting a program based on interests?" As a matter of fact, these studies when made by teachers, are usually correlative with a teaching program, and are means for making it more effective. A second question follows: "What ways are there for starting off a project program? Are there any methods for finding out present interests?" One way which is frequently used is to expose children to one or a number of interests and then to observe the children's response. Is that response spontaneous? Does the interest elicit not only the children's attention, but does it call forth the desire to pursue it? How many of the group respond?

Now whether this method of discovering children's interests is successful depends largely on a previous knowledge of psychological development. Indeed, it might be said that with any method for discovering the interests of any age, it is essential that one know something of the facts and factors of genetic psychology. In the past few years there has been steady progress in research in this field, and many excellent books are available for teachers and parents. Whether one is interested in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood, there are helpful books on the characteristics, general needs, and problems of these periods.[1] What other people have found out about children can be exceedingly useful in understanding the behavior of a particular group.

1. A selected list of books on the child is included in the appendix.

With this knowledge of psychology as a background, the teacher may ask herself, "What are likely to be the fields of interest of my age group?" She can then plan an experience or experiences which may elicit a spontaneous response, always remembering that for her particular group it may not be a spontaneous interest. When this "setting the stage" is based on experiences and interests appropriate to the children's development, it is frequently an effective method.

It must be recognized that there is a danger that the teacher will "set the stage" with interests which she believes the children should have, a position often reflecting her own, an adult's, interests. This cannot be regarded as desirable, nor true to our interest-theory, which holds that we must start where children are, with their present interests. Furthermore, when the interest is foreign to children's experience, it will fail to produce "whole-hearted, purposeful activity".

Several illustrations are given of this method of interest discovery as it is a plan rather widely used.

A third grade class at the Union School of Religion found an aquarium project most absorbing for several weeks, and this is how it began:

"The teacher had brought a small fish bowl with two tadpoles and water snails in it as a means of giving the children a bit of contact with forms of animal life."

The children's response: "Albert came first bringing his little brother. When he saw the bowl on the table, he exclaimed 'O Boy', and the children were absorbed in watching the movements in the bowl." As the other children came, one after another joined the group around the bowl, commenting on the tadpoles and snails, telling about the aquarium at school. Then,--"let's have an aquarium," said Sherwood.

"What would we need for an aquarium?" asked the teacher.

This led to making a list of the necessary articles, also why they were necessary.

"The teacher had prepared bits of information about the care and equipment of an aquarium on sheets of paper, typewritten in large letters so that the children could read them easily. These she now gave out so that the children could begin to gather their own data."

The children were to take charge of chapel the following Sunday, and when the question came "What do we want to tell about in chapel?" the answer was "Let's tell about our aquarium." Songs, poems, and a story were contributed by different members of the class.

The children were eager to draw fishes, snails, tadpoles, etc. "While they were drawing quietly, the teacher reminded them of the snail's way of protecting himself, and asked if there were other small creatures who protected themselves in similar ways." In the discussion that followed the children told what they knew about animals changing their skins. And then the teacher asked if God has given man any ways of protecting himself.

"We have brains to think with and to find out what is best to do", said Shewood. And the others said that though man couldn't fly, he could build airplanes. The teacher said that sometimes man used his strength to protect animals.

"The suggestion came up that they visit the aquarium and see how the fish are cared for." This met with an eager response, and on the following Sunday the whole group went to the New York Aquarium. "They had an unusual opportunity to see fish coloration and actually saw several kinds in the process. The sea horses were fascinating as well as turtles, lobsters, starfish, sea anemone, and the salmon hatcheries. In this way they could see the fish at various stages of growth."

This interest in the life of the salmon was continued the following Sunday by the teacher's reading a story by David Starr Jordan.

Later on "the teacher asked them how they might put together in a form that other people might understand some of the things they had been talking about, such as how animals protect themselves, how they protect us, how we protect ourselves, etc. Pictures were suggested, then putting them into a poster, and they looked over our pictures to see if we had any that we could use, if not, who would make the different ones. After each one had decided on a piece of work he began to carry it out."[1]

This situation has been given in some detail to illustrate not only the finding of interests, but also how these may be developed.

Another experience with a third grade class in the Union School shows a little different approach.

"(The teacher) and the principal had agreed in advance that a study of animal life would probably be a realm of interest for this grade group and that such study would offer opportunities for the discussion of behavior problems and might also lead to a finer appreciation of purpose in the universe. As a method of suggesting to the children this realm of probable interest, the teacher had therefore planned in advance to ask them to tell about their summer vacations. She expected that animals would play an important part in the stories the children told, and she herself had prepared to tell incidents of animal life from her own summer's experiences."[2] And in fact, such an interest was shown. "Each child told what he had enjoyed most during the summer vacation. A keen interest in animals was disclosed in the

1. From a Union School of Religion Diary Record. Mrs. Blair, teacher. Third Grade class.
2. Sweet, Helen P. and Tabs, Sophie L.: Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds, P. 6.

discussion. John had some very interesting things to tell about frogs, such as the fact that their ears are in their hind feet. The teacher told a story of some chipmunks she had seen during the summer, storing nuts in their pouches and later burying the nuts for winter use. This led to a discussion of how animals work largely through instinct and through trial and error, and how people have minds which they may use to think things out intelligently."[1] The following Sunday one of the girls, Ruth, brought a live frog in a glass jar. "The children were all the more interested when they were told that it was a frog Ruth's mother had brought from Germany where during the summer the family had been visiting a grandmother .. .. While their interest in frogs was warm, the children decided that next week they would try modelling frogs in clay."[2] This interest in animals proved to be a very real one. Studying frogs led to a study of birds, then of fish, involving discussions of the beginning and meaning of life.

An interesting situation was observed in a second grade class in the Church School of the Church of the Redeemer, New Haven, Conn. A plan for a good-will Pageant had been decided upon by the Church School staff as a closing session for the year. It remained for the classes to decide what part they would take in it. In this second grade class, the teacher had planned in advance about the group's contribution. It remained to get the children to accept it.

The teacher, Miss P---, began by holding up a picture of the

1. Ibid, P. 11
2. Ibid, P. 8

shepherds of Bethlehem. "Who can tell me what this picture is?" she asked.

"O, the shepherds." "Yes, and the angels came to them", responded the class.

"Can you tell me what the angels sang?" asked Miss P---.

Silence for a moment. Then "About Jesus." "About peace."

"Yes, about peace, and something else", said Miss P---.

After a while "good-will" came out. "Peace " and "good-will" were written on the blackboard. "What do you think of when you think of peace?" asked Miss P---.

After some thought, "Happiness" and "No fighting" were given.

"And good-will! What does that make you think of?"

"Kindness", and "doing good to others" came out after some talk back and forth.

Then came a Bible story,--of Eliezer's search for a wife for Isaac, and the meeting with Rebeccah at the well. At the conclusion of the story Miss P--- asked "Who showed good-will in this story?" And the answer was, of course, Rebeccah, in helping a stranger.

"Does good-will make you think of something else? Something that happened in November?" was the next query.

Now this proved hard for the children for they couldn't remember nor guess. Finally Miss P--- reminded them of a bag which they had packed with toys and sent to Mexico.[1] Miss P--- told something of what was hoped from these toys,--that little Mexican children would learn that there were Americans who showed good-will.

The Good-Will Pageant was then introduced, and the question

1. A project fostered by the International Committee of the Federal Council of Churches. Some 25,000 bags were sent to Mexican children from children all over the United States.

raised, "What could we do for our part?" There was no response from the children. Miss P--- asked, "Don't you suppose we could tell about sending the bags of toys to Mexico?" She went on to explain what might be done;--one child could tell why the bags were sent; another to tell of what went into the bags; still another to tell of the children who received them. The response was scarcely enthusiastic, but after some encouragement, they admitted it could be done, and that they would like to have a part. The most interesting thing in this session was the use of the children's present and past experience in leading up to the pageant idea. The recalling of the message to the shepherds, the children's everyday experiences of good-will, the sending the toys to Mexico, etc. It was a careful leading up to the Pageant, all the time keeping on the child-experience level.

In the elementary grades of the Lincoln School, this "setting the stage" method is frequently used. Some suggestions of the way it is followed are briefly summarized:

The setting of the stage may take place before the beginning of school through placing books, wood, boxes, paper, paints, animals, or other materials in the classroom. Pupils explore the material. They begin their own pieces of work. They draw others into them. The teacher may have to modify or perhaps completely discard her prearranged plan and make a new approach, better adapted to the special needs and interests of the group---If the class, however, shows at once what it wished to do, that is the place to begin, and the teacher's task for the time being is only to direct it so that is is growing. But if the group does not have well defined notions, or any notions,

then one of the following methods might be used in starting the work.

1. The pupils with the teacher make a survey of what they have to do during the year. They talk over the work of previous years; and make suggestions of what they would like to do. The skillful teacher shows that she values these suggestions highly.

2. Leads for the center of interest may develop out of the experiences of pupils during the summer. Pupils bring in their summer collections or exhibits and tell about them, and this may lead to inspirations for the others.

3. It is generally possible for the teacher to set the stage so that a particular unit of work is sure to arise. The list of available units for each grade should be large so that individual differences in teachers and children may show themselves..... The teacher should be watching for usable leads into the particular units or projects which she wants to have the class undertake. She will know whether the leads are usable from her knowledge of children, from her understanding of the demands of education, and from criteria which have been set up for the selection of units. Only if that is true may she set the stage for the development of particular units. The teacher can then set the stage, may do so, but she must not control all the thinking of the child or all the doing of the child.

4. Still another method of setting the stage is for the pupils, with the teacher, to make a complete survey of the available school equipment. Library, tools, opportunities for work of

various sorts, are examined and talked about. Out of the equipment and its use may arise the center of interest.[1]

It has been said that the teacher must be willing to change her plan, when the children do not respond or evidence another interest. A situation of this type was observed one morning at the Lincoln School.

It was a class in household art, with some 14 girls, 11-13 years of age. The teacher came before the class prepared to teach on salted and spiced nuts. The nuts were in bowls on the tables, and other materials were ready. She began by telling the girls how the nuts were prepared, calling for information from the group on weighing, temperatures, etc. She was quite definitely using their previous experience, bringing it to bear on the experiment for the day. However, the teacher was not getting the undivided attention of the girls,--whispering and fussing were noticeable. Then it developed that they were not interested in working with nuts; they wanted to make fondant and to experiment in coloring and shaping it. This came out again and again: "But can't we make fondant to-day?" "Can't those of us who want to make fondant do that, and let the others work with the nuts?" This persisted until the teacher stopped and asked "How many want to salt and spice nuts?" A show of two or three hands. Then, "how many want to work with fondant?" Instant show of many hands! Here was a problem for the teacher. Now the girls were making the candy for Christmas boxes, so the teacher asked, "how many of you want to have nuts in your boxes when they are finally made up?" About five girls responded. When

1. Lincoln Elementary School Staff: Curriculum Making in an Elementary School, Pp. 46-50.

the teacher told them why it was a good thing to fix the nuts on that day--that they would keep over a longer period of time, while other things would need to be made shortly before Christmas. So these five girls went to work with the nuts while the others experimented with fondant.

Careful preparation is involved in this method of "setting the stage", and it is also important that the teacher be alive to the response of her group, that she be willing to change her own plan if necessary, and that she will give the children time to discover themselves and their own interests.

c. The Use of Forms

As a means for discovering interests in a particular group, the use of a check-list or a similar form is sometimes employed with good effect. A wide range of problems and questions are listed, and this is given to members of a group who rate the items according as they think them important or unimportant.

One such form to be used with young people is headed "How do you feel about it?" This was prepared by Dr. Goodwin Watson for the Series of Character and Personality Tests for the Association Press, New York.[1] The form lists seventy-five items to be checked either

Doesn't matter especially

Really interested in it, or

Tremendously important personally.

It also includes space for giving additional interests or problems, under the headings

What questions puzzle you most?

1. A copy of this form is included in the Appendix.

What things that you enjoy doing would you most like more chance to do?

What things that you enjoy by yourself would you most like to share with a group of others having the same interest?

As you look at the world around you, thinking of what it is and what it might be, what would you most like to see changed?

Do you think of any other remarks that might help individual adults and organizations dealing with young people to understand better your life--your needs--your real interests?[1]

This form is a useful instrument for Young Peoples Societies, Sunday School Classes, and Association Groups. It provides a means for getting the expression of larger groups of young people.

Collecting Experiences in a Study of Behavior

The International Council of Religious Education has prepared a form for recording experiences, which may be used by teachers, club sponsors, and others concerned in child training and group leadership. The purpose is to collect the experiences which are observed by the teacher or leader reporting, and the observation includes a description of the type of situation and the response of the individual or individuals in each experience. If this form is widely used, it should result in the gathering of a vast amount of material on experiences of many types and behavior of many types. Space is provided on the form for giving certain information about the person or group observed, including home life, school, play, occupation, religious life, etc. The International Council believes

1. A copy of this form is included in the Appendix.

that from this gathering of experiences that they will be able to plan curriculum material which will be more closely related to individual and group needs.[1]

d. An Experiment with an Interest-Program

The following situation is given to show how one group worked out a plan for a year's program based on their own interests and problems. This is a church school class of university students led by a member of the faculty.[2] The teacher had full freedom in planning the course, and there were no limits to what the class might do. Now the teacher wished the class to have vital meaning for the students, and he wished the program to center about their own needs and interests. So he began his discovery of those interests by asking the students to hand in their own problems; this proved unfruitful, as few problems were handed in.

Then the teacher went through a large number of books on college life and student problems, and picked out all the questions which seemed to him might concern these college students; he added to these the problems which had been handed in, together with some others which he considered important. These were made into a list under three groups,--

Problems of Student Life

Problems of Religious Thought

Problems of Living in the Larger World.

This list was sent to the class members who were asked to judge the items in the following way:

2.....if it is of such real interest to you that you want to

1. See Appendix for a copy of this form.
2. University Park Church, Denver, Colo.

have it discussed.

1.....if it is of interest to you, so that you are willing to have it discussed.

0.....if you are not interested, or for some other reason prefer not to have it discussed.

This met with a good response, and when the ratings were turned in, the teacher asked a committee of the students to go over these, to decide on a basis for the selection of topics of the greatest interest, to rate the items in importance, to decide on the order of the topics for discussion, and to decide the length of time to be given each.

In practice this was a flexible program. Any topic which was so interesting that the students wanted to give more time to it was allowed a longer period for discussion. When this was done, the last, or least important topic in the group (as so rated) was dropped.[1]

Judging from the continued interest and support of the class, the program thus planned was successful in relating to the experience of the group.

The discovering of interests for any group is an experimental matter. There appears to be no one reliable method, and it would seem that different methods may be desirable for different groups. In childhood one appraoches through sensory material, as the child's world is largely sensory; but with the maturing of the individual, the approach is much more intellectual. However, for child and adult, it would seem that an opportunity should be given to respond to a number of interests, whether they be of a sensory or an intellectual nature. There should be an

1. A copy of the list of problems is included in the Appendix.

allowance for individual differences, and a chance to exercise choice.

5. CERTAIN FACTORS IN PROJECT SELECTION

a. The Part of the Institution in Curriculum Organization

The selection of projects is closely connected with discovering interests, and discussion of the one subject leads on to a consideration of the other. Indeed this is a relation which is evident in practice; for after interests are revealed, there is a selecting process by which some interests are chosen as more promising to follow than others. With whom does this selection rest? Does the teacher have full freedom of choice? And what is the position of the school organization? Let us consider the practices found in the schools observed.

The City and Country School: In this School, each age group follows a year project or central activity. The teacher consults with the director and staff, and after consideration, they decide on the activity together. Then the teacher and children create the curriculum materials for the development of the project. It is held that the children are doing things in their own way even when the program is suggested.

The school works on certain hypotheses concerning the interests which are likely to be found with different age groups; these are based on previous experiences with children in the school. For example, it is believed "that through six years of age the children are particularly individual and creative and express themselves in play; that six and seven are transition periods; that eight, nine, and ten are periods when they particularly gain standards of work."[1] These, then, are the factors determining the selection of central activities for each group. The aim is to relate the program to the

1. Bulletin of City and Country School, 1927-1928, P. 5

child's development.

Lincoln School: A similar plan is followed in the elementary division of the Lincoln School. The program for the year is determined by the teacher, principal, and staff, after conference. The units of work which the teacher has in mind are influenced by the Criteria of Selection as given in Chapter I of this study. Several activity plans and the possibilities of each are considered, and those that are approved by the staff, depend for their final selection on the response of the children. By the co-operative consideration of year programs for each grade, the teaching staff is able to eliminate overlappings in the program, guard against omissions, and provide for integration and improving standards of work. It is held that the curriculum of the school is worked out by teachers and pupils,[1] and that the administration gives them full freedom. It is true that much freedom is given in the developing of a project, but in fact the administration serves as a guide and supervisor in planning the year's program for each group.

The Union School of Religion: In the Union School of Religion, the year's program is outlined in certain "Suggested Curricular Areas",[2] which act as selective factors. These "Areas" are based on children's desires and curiosities (as revealed by studies in child psychology), direct and indirect experiences which are held to be desirable for children to have, and certain fundamental purposes which are aims for achievement.

The "Suggested Curricular Areas" for 1928-29 were:

Nursery
Kindergarten } Home Life
Grade I

1. Lincoln Elementary School Staff, Curriculum Making in an Elementary School, P. 340
2. See Appendix for "Suggested Curricular Areas", 1928-1929.

Grades II, III--Animal Life in Relation to Human Life

Grades IV, V, VI--The Human Race Growing Up in its Religious Faith and Practice

Grades VII, VIII, IX--Life Story of Jesus

Grade X--The Historical Background for Modern Christian Beliefs and Practice

Within these "Areas", the teacher and class have considerable freedom to choose what they will do and how they will do it. The teacher has frequent conferences with the Director, and regular staff meetings give opportunity for discussion of the program. Each teacher thus knows what the others are doing.

The Park Avenue Baptist Church: In the Elementary Department of the Church School, the curriculum is planned by the Director. Earlier in the chapter, it was brought out that in this school, the project method was used as a means for carrying out a predetermined program.

For example, in 1929, the Junior Department followed this outline:

Grade 4--Stories about Jesus

Grade 5--Ideas and Questions about God

Grade 6--Studying the Bible directly in Relation to Activity.

There was an attempt in this program to relate it to the experiences of children whenever possible, but there did not seem to be any method used for finding out what those experiences were. This meant that while some revealed interests were recognized and used, other promising leads were overlooked.

First Presbyterian Church, East Orange, N. J.: In the church school, the program is planned by the Education Committee, the Religious Education Director, and the Supervisor of Elementary Work. Areas of study are outlined for each grade; in selecting these, a well-integrated

program is the aim, so that last year's areas, and next year's, are kept in mind in plans for this year. This again represents an administration planned curriculum with the project method in use as a means for more effectively carrying out that program. It was admitted by the Supervisor of Elementary Work that the curriculum was largely subject-centered, but that it was constantly borne in mind that there whould be in each class a consideration of at least one world-wide problem, and an individual, or personality problem.

The program areas for the year 1928-1929 were:

Grades I, II -- Old Testament Stories

Grade III -- At School with the Great Teacher

Grades IV, V, VI -- Better Americans

Grades VI, VIII -- Story of Our Bible

High School -- Life of Paul -- Spread of Christianity

Problems of To-day

Life of Jesus.

It was claimed that within these areas, there was considerable freedom given to teacher and class in developing them.

In these schools, it is found that the school administration is a determining factor in curriculum planning. Even in the City and Country School, the most progressive in the group in the matter of a "free" curriculum, the central activity for each age group is determined in advance.

This planned-in-advance program in progressive schools is frequently criticized as foreign to the principle of the project method. Due to limited information, it cannot lie within the province of this study to discuss this position. However, several implications which seem important can be pointed out.

With the day schools, the Union School of Religion and the East Orange Church School, the factor of integration entered into the planning of their programs. It was aimed to have a series of experiences and activities which from year to year would provide opportunities for growth. It was hoped that to this end, the interests and needs of children at each stage might be called forth and act as the means and basis for promoting that growth.

The importance of the method of discovering interests in "setting the stage" becomes even more significant in the light of the planned program. When the teacher desires her group to work within a certain area, and yet wishes the program to be built on the group's interests, it requires from her a great deal of skill and insight. The test in using the teacher's plan, according to Kilpatrick is: do the children whole-heartedly accept that plan as their own? This means that the teacher and school administration must be careful students of children's needs, interests, and problems, so that in any proposed plan, there is a good chance for "whole-hearted acceptance".

It is entirely probable that the planned program represents a transition stage in educational method, and that as more is known of children's interests at different periods of development, there will be a resulting confidence in a program built entirely upon them.

b. Opportunities Within the Planned Program

In connection with the planned program we should like to point out, with the aid of illustrations, at least two opportunities and one danger for the teacher.

Let no one think that the predetermined curriculum closes the opportunity for discovering interests. Even in the set program it is

possible so to proceed as to awaken interests already there. An example of this was observed at the Ethical Culture School.

In a first grade class, it was time for the music period. The music teacher came in carrying a violin case, and a helper brought in a small organ and a victrola. Taking the violin out of its case, the music teacher asked, "What is this instrument?"

"A violin", answered several children.

Teacher: "How many strings are there?"

Children: "Four". "My cousin plays a violin in a band."

Teacher: "Not in a band, but in an orchestra. Now notice the way I hold the violin. I can't play, but I can show you how it's done." She played several notes, asked the children if they could tell the difference, and called their attention to the effect of shortening the string.

While the children pretended to be holding violins, going through the motions of bowing, the teacher sang a little song.

.....

In this music period it seemed a good idea to bring in the violin, to let the children see it at close range, hear it, and touch it gently. Along the same line was the teacher's promise that on the next day, she would let every child play on the organ. In this way, musical instruments become a part of the children's own experience, and are not things which belong only to adults.

Another example in awakening interests was observed at the City and Country School. The 10 year age-group were busy making Christmas cards, carrying the whole process through from designing the card to printing it. Several children lacked inspiration in designing, and appealed to the teacher: "What shall I draw?" "I can't think

of anything." Their teacher sat down first with one and then another, with "What do you think of when you think of Christmas?" This would start a train of associations, and a good idea for a card would be forthcoming.

An illustration of failing to use opportunities for utilizing children's interests is given because it ia s type of situation which occurs frequently:

At the Church of the Redeemer in New Haven, Conn., a Mothers and Daughters Banquet was planned. It was advertized as a "most unusual program" and it was planned by one person, an older woman. The observer was with a class of eighth grade girls on the Sunday morning when the Banquet was announced.

"What is the program to be, Mrs. B---?" asked one of the girls.

"O, that's a secret. You must come and find out. You may be sure it will be good," answered the teacher.

A mother-daughter banquet and these eighth grade girls had no part in planning it--didn't know what it was to be!

Another opportunity in the "set program" is in being alive to the spontaneous interests revealed by the group. It is necessary that the teacher exercise patience so that any chance for a spontaneous response may not be killed by unwise pressure or suggestion. Even when the teacher knows what she wants her group to do, it is well to use the children's way of starting it, if that is possible. If the teacher will look for "leads" from her children, she has a much better chance of relating the project to their interests.

In a fourth grade class at the Union School of Religion, the "area" for the year had been decided by teacher and director as the development of religious beliefs and practices. On the first meeting of the

class, the teacher encouraged the group to talk about what they had done in the summer. "Mervin seemed eager to tell about something he had done last night rather than during the summer. He described quite clearly and very enthusiastically a visit with his father to the Columbia University Observatory. Movability of the floor and dome had impressed him tremendously. Just which stars or constellations he had seen through the telescope he couldn't remember, but so far as he went he used rather specialized and very accurate terms in describing the apparatus. The manner in which the great weight of the telescope is moved and adjusted with almost no effort, he pictured vividly. There was evident interest from the other children and quiet attention together with a universal desire--voiced by Marion--to visit the observatory as a class. Mervin had a keen sense of privilege in going since not everyone could get in..... When the teacher suggested that perhaps Mr. Oakes could help get permission for the fourth grade to go, Mervin thought maybe that way the class might see it."[1]

There is no further reference to this "lead" in the record; whether the teacher tried to get the permission to go to the observatory, or whether she reported on it to the class. But would not this expressed interest of the group have possibilities for development? In getting better acquainted with one another, in establishing rapport between teacher and class, as well as basing the development of religious beliefs and practices on a direct experience of the children. A visit to the observatory with the wonder of the heavens revealed to the children might give an excellent opportunity for introducing to them the influence of sun, moon, and stars on early ideas of God.

1. From Diary Record, Union School of Religion, Fourth grade. Mrs. Eastman, teacher.

Another example of an awakened interest which was not followed is found in a Diary Record for the Kindergarten in the Union School.

On a Sunday morning, after a group of negro children had dramatized "The Good Samaritan" in the Chapel service, Jimmie said, "I'd like to be the man who was hurt if I had time".

Teacher: "Do you mean that you would like to play the story?"

Jimmie: "Yes, I'd like to play it if I had time."

Janet: "I'll be the sick man."

Clara: "I'll be the hotel man."

Jimmie: "I have time now. I'll be the sick man."

Janet: "No, I will."

Jimmie: "Who will be the robber?"

Janet: "Robbers are naughty to peoples."

Billy: "I'll be the robbers."

Teacher: "I believe Billy would rather be the man who helped."

Janet: "No, I'm going to be that."

Clara urged that the game be played. She selected a place for the hotel but the children seemed unable to organize the dramatization. I was very doubtful of its value, so I began singing in response to the picture of a horse which Jackie was looking at."

Later on in the record: "Janet seems to be acting the story."

Walter: (as he is being wrapped up to go out to play) "That was a naughty man."

Still later: Janet to another little girl:-- "That was a naughty man to hurt peoples like that. It was naughty to take his money and his clothes."

The record gives the reason for not following this interest

in the teacher's "I was very doubtful of its value." Since the interest had been awakened in the Chapel program, and since the response was so evident, would it not have been desirable for the teacher to help in the dramatization which the children wanted to carry out? The experience seemed not to be beyond their comprehension, and the teacher might have helped them to emphasize the "good Samaritan" rather than the "naughty robber" element.

We have mentioned that there is a certain danger in the set program, and it is this: that teachers are sometimes tempted to ascribe the origination of an activity to the children, when it is their own (the teachers') plan. It may be that they are anxious for a program really built on children's interests; it may be that they wish their program to be judged an experience-centered program by those who observe it. Whatever the cause, one frequently finds teachers yielding to the temptation. If the teacher's plan is accepted by the children so that it becomes their own, there should be no criticism of the origin of the plan. In this experimental period of discovering interests, it is desirable that we frankly admit the participation both of teachers and pupils.

> A class of girls in household art, at the Lincoln School, were making Christmas candy boxes. To the observer the teacher said that the children had decided on the boxes, also on what was to go in them. Then she added: "Last year we had some very poor boxes and this year I decided we'd have some really good ones." Which raised the question in the observer's mind as to how far the project had in fact originated with the girls.
>
> In the Junior Department of the Park Avenue Baptist Church School, the Director wished the observer to know about an activity which

had engrossed the group for several weeks. At Christmas time, the children brought toys from home to send to the Philippine Islands. Among other things two toy forts were included. There was some question whether the forts should be sent, and finally it was decided that a meccano set be sent instead. The Director said that this suggestion and decision came from the children. This interested the observer very much, and later, in talking with one of the boys she asked how the idea of the meccano set started. "Well," he said, "Dr. F. came in and suggested we send the meccano set, because it was constructive and the forts were destructive."

The forts were put away in a closet, and later discovered by a group who called them "castles". A letter had been received from a missionary in the Philippines, telling of the need for a hospital. This was connected with the forts, and one of them converted into a hospital, while the slogan "forts into hospitals" was adopted.

Had the teachers in these situations stopped to consider the matter, it is very likely that they would not claim the origination of the plans for the children. Perhaps it was felt that the plans had been so enthusiastically accepted that their origination was unimportant. However, to the teacher interested in the practice of the project method, this point is very important, for it concerns the teacher's part in the process.

6. THE PLACE OF THE TEACHER IN THE PROJECT METHOD

Throughout our study, there has been constant reference to the part taken by the teacher in following the project method,--in the intensive study of behavior and the discovery of interests, and guidance

in the selection of material. Indeed the teacher's part is an integral factor in any consideration of this method. Therefore, at this point, the aim is merely to point out some of the ways in which the teacher may further the effectiveness of a project experiment.

a. To give counsel and information when needed:

We have spoken of the teacher as the more experienced member of the group, and there are many times, when her experience is called upon by the pupils. Her part is to help at the point where she is needed.

An example of this was observed in a class of girls in household art at the Lincoln School. After the work for the morning had been decided upon, the girls went to their tables and began to gather materials and utensils. The observer noticed very little teacher supervision in all this. But presently there were frequent calls for the teacher, for information, for advice, for criticism. Instead of answering the questions outright, the teacher would turn them back to the class, with "Who knows how to do this?" "How shall we find out?" "If we do this, what will we get?" And if the girls did not know, then the teacher would help them out.

A similar situation was observed at the City and Country School, with the Ten Year Olds. The teacher was obviously one of the group, and the children frequently went to her for information and advice. Often there were several calls for her attention at the same time,--then each had to wait his turn. Pupil initiative was encouraged, but the teacher was there for conference when needed.

b. To make materials available:

In carrying out a project, the teacher may give valuable aid in directing children to source materials, to books and magazines for information, and in providing concrete materials for construction.

Many times she will encourage children to find and bring in their own materials, but on other occasions, she will need to furnish them.

A ninth grade class at the Union School of Religion were engaged in a study of the Life of Jesus. They were preparing an illustrated booklet which was to contain the following: Stories of Jesus as he was seen by his contemporaries, and reports of Jesus which might have been written by persons living since his time. These were to be written by members of the class, and involved a great deal of information not easily available. The teacher reported that he did not give them information directly, but he tried to provide the best books for them to use in getting their own information, and to guide them in the use of these books. He had about twenty-five books on the Life of Jesus and on Contemporary Life in Palestine and on the Roman World. These books were kept on a desk, available for use by anyone in the class. The teacher gave a book to any pupil who might make use of it.

The following situation illustrates how the teacher may encourage the children to find materials as well as furnishing others herself.

The children of the third grade class in the Union School of Religion, had been on a trip to Central Park, and they were interested in the sheep there. When this experience was retold on a later Sunday, the teacher used pictures of sheep and shepherds. She asked them "if they would like to try making some clay sheep the next time they worked in clay. Sherwood suggested that they might make a little house for the sheep to live in, and that he would work on it during the week. Elizabeth said that she would like to make a

shepherd, and that she had some pictures at home that would show how shepherds are dressed. The teacher then suggested that they might put the house in a field or meadow. 'We could get rocks from Riverside to make hills', said Dick. As the period closed, several of the children lingered to talk about what they might bring next time for the shepherd scene."

On the following Sunday, materials were in readiness when the children came. Pictures, models, plasticene for molding. "The children were all eager to begin working." Some worked on sheep, others on a sheepfold, one a dog. While they were busy, the teacher read the story of the little lamb that was lost and the shepherd's search for it.

When it came time to add the shepherds to the scene, one child said that it would be nice to have the nativity shepherds. This was just at Christmas time, and the teacher read the shepherd story from Luke.[1]

c. To contribute her skills when needed:

In addition to giving counsel, information, and furnishing materials, there are times when the teacher aids through her own skills. Many projects call for techniques which are beyond the children's experiences. Then their "more experienced member" contributes to the success of the group project.

An excellent illustration of this sort of co-operative project is found in an activity carried on in the Music Department of the Lincoln School. For the past three years, the children of the fourth, fifth and sixth grades have composed a symphony, and played it with their own orchestra. One may well ask what children of

1. From Diary Record for the third grade, Union School of Religion Teacher, Mrs. Blair.

this age can know of symphonic construction. But it is just here that teacher and pupils create together. The children contribute the themes, and their leader weaves them into symphonic form. After the second symphony was composed in 1929, Mrs. Satis Coleman, the Director, said in a review, "We first tried Haydn's 'Kindersymphonie'. Then I wrote a symphony for the pupils. But last year in discussion, they decided they wanted one of their own. So I told them if they would give me the tunes, I would build a symphony for them. The resulting Symphony in F major, given last year, was the first made by the children and the first of its kind in the history of music."

"This year the children gave me no rest until I promised we should have another. They gave me 150 themes and motifs. These I wove into symphony form."

It should be added that in the spring of 1930, the third children's symphony was composed and produced.

d. To encourage habits of criticism and discrimination, and standards of work.

It is frequently said by those concerned with creative activities in progressive schools, that they are concerned that the creative expressions of the children have real meaning for them, and that technical skill is a secondary consideration. With this position we should entirely agree. At the same time, it is felt that children should learn to discriminate between a fair and a good attempt in creative form, and that certain standards of work may serve to encourage them to produce the best expression of which they are capable.

The observations described illustrate both desirable and undesirable situations.

At the City and Country School, the observer was impressed not only by the type of work produced by the children, but equally by their attitude toward it. The Ten Year Group were making Christmas cards. Three of their number acted as an Art Committee, and they were in frequent demand for criticism of designs, and also for suggestion. When the first prints came from the press and were held up for the group to see, their criticism was not only expected but wanted. It must be constructive criticism, however, with reasons for approval or disapproval. The children held each other up to their best; after one design was exhibited for judgment, a girl on the art committee said, "But J--- can do much better than that." Furthermore, these standards of work and critical habits were applied by individual members to themselves:

"I did this....." said one, "but I should have done that...." and "My first attempt was wrong" said another, "I'd like to try again and do better."

A less commendable situation was observed with a class of Juniors in the First Presbyterian Church in East Orange. There had been a session devoted to a study of the Life of Jesus, and a handwork period followed. With the handwork there was a tendency to hurry from one piece of work to the next, with a praising of every effort with little regard to its merits or the ability of the child. As soon as a picture was completed, it was "What will you do next?" or "What shall I do next?" Some of the work appeared to be inferior to what the children really might do. There was a certain depreciation which seemed to show this,--"O, it's no good." "It's not much." And one boy was heard to say to another, "You can do

lots better than that. Your other drawing was twice as good."

A little guidance from the teacher here, some discrimination in judging work, and the children's efforts might be more satisfying to them, and more representative of their ability.

It is not enough to enlist children's participation in an activity. The teacher must be alive to the quality of thinking and quality of work which are exhibited.

Reference has been made to the illustrative book which was being made in connection with a study of The Life of Jesus by the ninth grade class in the Union School of Religion. Filed away in a folder was the completed work, and part of this was quite inferior to the rest. One approved report was "A Bolshevick's Experience of Jesus." This was very poorly done. It showed a distorted idea of what a Bolshevist is. The Bolshevist was represented as a cruel persecutor of Armenians who publicly killed Armenians because they were Christians but who in private worshipped the Christian God.

Here is a situation which could be worked out by teacher and pupils together,--in developing fair-mindedness and discrimination. The pupils might form their own standards for judging completed work, and a committee of their own number act as judges.

e. To Have a Concern for Individual Needs

In the midst of group activity the teacher must not overlook the needs of individual children. There are always those who need extra attention and special guidance. Sometimes it is the aggressive child who needs a word to keep him from dominating the group, and again the shy child needs encouragement. Whether in behavior situations or in matters of study, the teacher should be alive to these individual needs.

In a first grade class at The Ethical Culture School, the group were

discussing the day's program. They were engaged in making a house with all its furnishings. One little boy, Richard, wanted to make all the interesting articles; he was quite sure about how this and that should be done, and he seemed to enjoy taking the lead in suggestions and explanations. Only when he tried to take another boy's work away from him because he thought he could do it best, the teacher explained that each one must carry out his own work. Richard had the qualities of a leader, but the teacher would not permit him to exercise these to the extent of subduing the other children.

It is the other type of child, the shy child, who often needs encouragement. One such child was among the Tens at City and Country. She was having difficulty with her Christmas card design, and when a more aggressive girl stopped to look at it, and offer suggestions, the shy little girl pushed the paper over, with "you do it!"

It is sometimes a difficult matter in dealing with the individual child to keep a balance between criticism and encouragement. The shy child is particularly sensitive to criticism, and it may be that for the time, the encouragement fails of its influence.

An example of this kind was observed in the same Tens group at City and Country. A shy little girl had finished her design and taken it to the teacher for criticism. The design was composed of tiny figures, and the teacher, while praising them, said that the design would not make a suitable or attractive Christmas card, and she urged the child to try again. The little girl drooped visibly; she crumpled the drawing, then going to the washbasin, began to bathe

her eyes, exclaiming "Something is the matter with my eyes." She washed them vigorously, and when tears and water were dried, she took a book and went out of the room to the Library.

An educational philosophy and method which is child-centered requires that the teacher have a concern for all factors pertaining to the child,--his development as an individual, that he may have the widest opportunities to realize his highest possibilities; and at the same time a concern that the child grow in all his social relationships, that he may become a worthy member in all the social groups which have value for him. Such a position presents a challenge to the teacher, an element of adventure, and a promise of satisfaction that gives a new meaning and a greater worth to her profession.

7. FREEDOM IN THE PROCESS

a. Freedom in Physical Activity

It may be asked whether the limitations of schools and classrooms as they are generally planned do not handicap an interest-program which requires space and freedom of movement for effective achievement. Must freedom of physical activity wait upon new equipment and specially planned buildings? These are very practical questions which confront teacher or school in considering an experiment with the project method. Here, again, we turn to the schools observed, for illustration of what is being done.

The classrooms at the City and Country School appear quite small, until one realizes that the classes rarely number over fifteen children. However, in the room of the Tens, every inch of space seemed to have been carefully considered. Instead of desks, each child had a table and chair, and these were arranged in a large

square which left the center of the room free. This space was used as a "work-room" when needed. Not all of the children's work was carried on in this home-room; there was a small room for the printing press (printing being the central activity of the Tens), and other special rooms such as the Science Room, Library, and Gymnasium.

In the home-room, the children were free to move about, to go out of the room, and to talk, without asking permission. But the freedom was controlled by the group's own organization, headed by a chairman. To the observer, this self-government worked effectively. During one morning, the teacher was out of the room at least half of the time. Each pupil continued with his work, and there was the minimum of interruption and loafing. Whenever the talking became too disturbing, someone would call,--"It's too noisy. I can't work. Chairman, call for order," and the chairman would rap on the table for "order" and get a quick response. Throughout the morning, there was a constant coming and going,--to the neighborhood store to buy materials, to the printing-room, to the Library--and back again. But in all of this there was so much earnest purpose that it could only be thought desirable.

In contrast to the small rooms, narrow stairways, and winding halls at the City and Country School, the building of the Lincoln School is thoroughly modern in architectural planning and equipment. The laboratories and workshops are equipped with the most modern apparatus; the halls are wide, and the rooms spacious. Indeed, the rooms are large enough for the class to build a miniature farm, a city, or a house in which the children can be at home, and still have space for other activities. In the elementary department,

there is as great a degree of freedom of movement as at the City and Country School, but in the upper grades, there is somewhat less, and it is restricted to certain periods. In the work-shop, where a class may be building ships, there is freedom to talk, to go out of the room for necessary tools or materials, to proceed undisturbed on a piece of work. There are other periods when classroom "order" is maintained,--classes in arithmetic, French, or literature.

At the Ethical Culture School, in the upper grades, there is an observance of institutional decorum, but a great deal of free movement is permitted in the first four grades. It should be said, however, that the other classes have movable desks which can be quickly moved aside when a more informal grouping is desired. The home-room of the first grade (which was observed) was large, bright, and airy; it was large enough to be divided into a "library" with small tables and chairs, and a "classroom" with a circle of chairs. The first period in the morning is given to discussion of plans for the day; the children and teacher sit in a circle, and informally "talk things over". Each child is encouraged to speak,--to tell what he's doing or wants to do. As the group is large, it is frequently divided for purposes of study; some of the children are more advanced than others. So while one group meets in the "classroom" the other is busy in the Library. The latter group is free to do what it wishes, so long as none disturbs the others. The children move about quietly, only occasionally drawing a request for "less noise, please". Later in the morning, there is a "free time" when the whole class may do what it wishes, and the room is a busy hive of work and play. When the children leave their home-room for "shop"

and "handwork", they are led by two of their own number.

The Union School of Religion meets in the buildings of the Union Theological Seminary. The beautiful chapel is used for the worship services, and this has meant a great deal to the children, judging by their frequent references to it. However, the School is not so fortunate in having to meet in the Seminary classrooms, offices, and museum. The formal atmosphere of the Seminary is in itself an obstacle to freedom of movement. Furthermore, there is the obligation to be very careful of all furnishings, and more than the mere feeling that as little noise as possible shall be made. Many of the rooms are very small, and physical activity is out of the question. In spite of many limitations, the School has gone ahead bravely. Each class has a recreation period of at least half an hour. In fair weather, the nearby parks are used for playgrounds, and when it is stormy, there is a gymnasium. Practically every class engages in some constructive activity, and certain rooms are set aside for special work.

Each teacher has the chief responsibility in guiding the freedom of her class; some make it a group responsibility, a plan which works with good success judging from Diary Records.

In one class of high school girls, the teacher noticed that the girls were writing on the furniture during the class hour. So she takes pencils and paper along, and the girls draw pictures. They seem to be able to do this and to take an active part in the discussion at the same time. The teacher feels that if there is a need for physical outlet, she should allow for it. In the same class, when the girls are eager to talk over everyday experiences,

and when these are uppermost, ~~that~~ it is thought best to give them a chance to "get it out of their systems" before attempting a discussion of the day's subject. This may give less time for discussion, but the teacher learns something of the interests and real needs of her girls.

The Junior Department of the Park Avenue Church has one large room. It is attractive, well-lighted and furnished, but in use has proved inadequate for the children's needs. When the classes meet in different parts of the room, interruption and distraction are frequent. This was annoying to the children themselves, and when plans for a new church were discussed with the, they asked for separate classrooms as well as a work-shop and an assembly room. These requests were taken seriously and provided for in the plans. While there was to the observer a noticeable amount of free movement, in many cases, it did not seem to be purposeful, but rather aimless wanderings. This was observed on only two occasions, and so scarcely adequate to form a judgment.

At the First Presbyterian Church in New Jersey, the Church School equipment is of a type that does not allow for much freedom of movement. Each department has an assembly room, with small classrooms opening from the sides and rear of the room. These are very small and barely contain the necessary chairs. A Junior group meeting from eleven to twelve on Sunday morning has a discussion period in the ladies' parlor, and uses an adjoining room for handwork, but this is a privileged group. There is another exception: the kindergarten group has a large, sunny room with adequate space and equipment for games, handwork or circle talk.

It will be noticed that in the three religious education schools

the equipment was decidedly limited.

However, it should be pointed out that in spite of limitations, the Union School of Religion has planned for free activity. With the day schools, City and Country is the most limited, and yet is perhaps the most progressive in method.

b. Encouraging Intellectual freedom

Let us now consider what evidence appears in observation in support of intellectual freedom in these school situations. It must be remembered that single observations are insufficient to form adequate or reliable opinions. However, in several situations, there were experiences significant enough to relate.

(1) Encouraging independent judgment

At the Lincoln School, in a high school class in World Literature, the teacher welcomed the individual judgments which were freely contributed. But opinions were challenged for evidence, and careless thinking discouraged. In suggesting that the class read certain plays of Plautus and Terence, the teacher said, "You have heard what I have said about these writers. Read them for yourself. Make your own judgments."

A similar situation was observed in a fifth grade class in Ethics at the Ethical Culture School. The class was led by Dr. Henry Neumann, and for a period of weeks, they had been studying the life of Moses. On the morning of observation, the last lesson of the study was in the nature of a review. Dr. Neumann's encouragement of independent thinking is evident in the following:

Dr. N.: "Does Moses remind you of any other great men?"

Boy: "Of Lincoln."

Dr. N.: "And in what way?"

Boy: "Because Moses led his people out of slavery, and Lincoln freed the slaves."

Dr. N.: "True. Anyone else?"

Little Girl: "Moses and Washington are alike. Washington was called the father of his people and Moses was the father of his race."

Dr. N.: "Very good. Anyone else?"

Second Boy: "Moses and Columbus are alike, because each discovered a new country.

A little girl suggested that "Joan of Arc was like Moses."

Dr. N.: "That's very interesting. Why do you think that?"

"Because", answered the girl, "whenever Joan led her people, they always won, and Moses said that so long as he held his arms up the people would win."

Dr. N. then asked for differences between Joan and Moses. Someone suggested the difference of sex, and this was rejected as "obvious--taken for granted." It was finally brought out that Joan was much more of a military leader than Moses.

Throughout the period, there was encouragement of individual opinions, and an approval of thoughtful contributions.

(2) Developing an atmosphere of freedom

In Mrs. Sweet's Diary Record,[1] we have an admirable illustration of the way in which a spirit of freedom may so develop in a class, what questions easily arise with the confidence that they will receive serious attention.

1. Sweet, Helen T. and Mills, Sophie I.: Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds, P. 46.

After talking about the morning chapel service, there followed the usual discussion of some episode in the week's experiences. John said, "I asked my mother a question last night, and she told me to ask you to-day. I'm sort of afraid to ask it, though." Being assured that the class would be glad to hear his question, no matter what it was, he gained courage and said, "Well, is there any God?"

"I will turn the question over to you children. Do you think there is a God?" said the teacher thoughtfully.

"Yes, I think there is," said Ruth. "I think He is made of the spirits of all the dead people in the world."

"No, that couldn't be", said John, "because if there is a God He must have made people before any of them could die; just how could He just be the spirit of dead people?"

Although this rejoinder puzzled Ruth, she was still able to defend her thought. "Well, I think God is a spirit", she said, "and the spirits of people who die are what make Him keep growing."

"Well, I think there was a God in olden times," said Robert.

The teacher asked him if by that he meant that he didn't think there is one now.

"Well, we don't know whether there is one now or not. We read stories in the Bible about a God then that people were sure of, so there must have been one then, but to-day people aren't so sure, so how do we know?"

"Well, if it says in the Bible that there is a God, then there must be one", Elizabeth declared confidently.

"Is everything in the Bible true?" asked the teacher. Some of the children were emphatic in saying "No". In fact no child thought

that everything in the Bible is true.

At this point the teacher went back to Robert's statement and explained to the children that for many centuries people have been asking John's question, "Is there a God?" In the olden times before people had any idea of how the world was made, or what the laws of nature are, their answers to this question took the form of stories. The world seemed so wonderful a place to these people that they felt there must be a God who made it.

Here the teacher called attention to our present greater understanding of the world and how our growing knowledge had changed our ideas of God.

"Well, it seems as though there must be a God", said John, "when we see such wonderful things in nature."

But John's question was not finally answered that day. The following Sunday it was found that each child had been thinking about it during the week, and other questions had been quickened. This proved to be so real a problem for these eight year olds that they spent many weeks studying the ideas of God which people have held in past ages. But if the teacher had seemed "uneasy or shocked" over John's question, or if she had given her own ideas of God first, she would probably not have discovered their ideas, and they would have lacked the freedom of discussion.

8. SOCIAL VALUES IN GROUP ACTIVITY

In the previous chapter, in considering Professor Kilpatrick's support of the project method, one of the factors which he advanced was that in the purposeful activity of children would be found the most desirable conditions for the development of social values. It was held that

in basing education on real life-experiences that children would have the best chance to build habits of give-and-take, of responsibility, of consideration for others; in short, to learn to live together. Furthermore, that our hope for worthy members of a democratic society depends for its realization in large measure on whether children build these habits in actual situations in the here-and-now, in being worthy members of their own group.

When children are engaged in activities which quicken their attention and effort, then the unsocial conduct of any of their group is disturbing, and calls for control. So long as the activity does not vitally concern the group, there is a certain indifference to what goes on. It is the teacher's affair, not theirs. The individual child may draw the disapproval of the teacher, and even get some satisfaction out of the attention he gets. But let a child break a rule which the group has made, and the resulting group disapproval is a different thing to face. Furthermore, group approval is intensely satisfying, and acts as a positive control. Now the teacher has an important part in guiding the direction of this group control in building ideals, and in her capacity of "more experienced member" she is the court of appeal. But in every possible way she encourages the children to form and follow their own social code.

The illustrations given represent a variety of social situations. While some of them cannot be described fully because of their length, enough is included to indicate the kind of experience.

Assuming responsibility for actions:

In Miss Acheson's experiment,[1] she relates a "class difficulty"

1. Acheson, Edna L.: The Construction of Junior Church School Curricula. P. 45+

which confronted her group of Juniors in their early days of organization. One Sunday morning, a beautiful snowfall had left material for snowballs temptingly near on the church window-sills. After class, a small group stayed for a business meeting. When the business was finished, one suggested throwing snowballs. A second hastened toward the first, tripped on an electric light cord, and crash! a beautiful lamp came to the floor and broke in many pieces. Silence reigned. Then came questions thick and fast. "What shall we do?" "Maybe we ought to pay for it." "Whose is it?" "Well, once I broke a window. I told the lady and she let me off." "Do you think we should be let off?" asked the leader. "She told you not to throw snowballs," said Peggy, who hadn't been in it.

"Let's keep it a dark secret." "Maybe we could fix it with glue." "Is that fair?" asked the leader. "No, we've got to tell the others, so they won't break anything."

"I'll have to tell the minister. Of course I haven't been here very long, and I hate to tell," said the leader.

"O", spoke up Sam, "do you think you'll lose your job?"

"No, I hardly think so," replied the leader. "But our club hasn't a very good repuration. Of course I'm to blame, too. I'm grown up and responsible for you.

"Let's tell the minister, and see if he's stern. If he lets us off let's not tell our mothers," said Peggy.

"Do we <u>have</u> to tell our mothers?" This from Steinie. "You see my mother thinks I'm always chasing around and breaking things. Let's not tell mothers."

Francesca nodded. She had a stepmother. "I wish it would

fix itself up like Alice in Wonderland," she said.

"How can we pay for it?" "Do we have to pay for it?" Issues kept coming up and many points of view had to be turned over.

Now the class had been given permission to meet in one of the most attractive rooms in the church. It belonged to the Young Woman's organization known as the World Service Guild. The "sad accident" necessitated contact with them as well as the trustees. On the very Sunday morning on which the lamp was broken, the president of the Board of Trustees came in. He sat down and talked with the children. Their sorrowful, guilty countenances moved him..... "We're ready to meet accidents like that. The trustees expect it, and I think these women will, too. Some boys have deliberately broken things--windows or doors. Then, of course, we hate to pay for it. But in a case like this we do not mind."

Further discussion resulted in a decision that the only honorable thing to do was to call on the president of the women's club and find out how much the lamp cost. An agreement was finally made with her that the children should meet half the cost of the lamp.

The next question was whether the whole group should bear the expense or just those who were responsible for the accident.

Bobby: "If it were something outside we wouldn't need to help share the expense, but since it happened here I think we should all help."

Peggy: "If the boy who did it had to pay for it I guess that would teach him a lesson. What does someone else think?"

Jeanette: "I think we should all share. Sometime you might do something and call for the others to help you."

Louise: "That's what a club ought to do. Stick together."

Harold: "I think that ought to be one of our first rules, that everybody help everybody else out of trouble."

Sam: "Why, what's a club for, if not for that?"

So everybody agreed to bear the guilt for the accident. "But if we can't tell our mothers, how are we going to get the money?"

"Shovelling snow" and "selling things at the back door" were suggested among other ways. In the discussion they came to the conclusion that whatever they did it must be something that mother would approve, and a job that had to be done anyway. Delivering the church paper, and addressing envelopes for an organization were two possible jobs; this called for correspondence and then the agreement was made and the work begun. It proved to be quite a task to address 200 envelopes, and fold the letters. But the children learned from the experience something of group responsibility, of the cost of furniture, and the meaning of labor and pay.

A situation involving individual responsibility developed in Mrs. Sweet's group at the Union School of Religion:

The children had been working at a table and it had become quite untidy. "As the children were clearing it up, they found at John's place an eraser that had been broken in two and bitten off at both ends. John said that it didn't belong to him, that he had taken it off the desk in the room when he was drawing. 'What shall we do about it?' asked the teacher.

'Well, it is John's responsibility because he took it,' said Janet.

'He should have asked you if he could use it,' said Jean.

'I didn't do it on purpose,' pleaded John. 'I would get interested in what we were talking about, and then I just chewed it and played

with it without thinking.

The teacher said, 'Since John did not do this on purpose and since we are a group using this room, do you think the group should take the responsibility for replacing it?'

'No,' they said with one accord. Janet insisted, 'John should take the whole responsibility because we had nothing to do with it.' The others thought the worst feature was John's taking the eraser without asking, when it did not belong to him. John said he would replace it next week with a new eraser."[1]

Consideration for others:

According to J. J. B. Morgan, the educational psychologist, children's earliest behavior is ego-centric, and it is only through gradual experience and adjustment that they become altruistic.[2] Whether one agrees with this interesting hythosesis or not, observation of, and experience with children shows that among first things to be learned is consideration of others and respect for their property. The small child who has had every want supplied by fond parents finds in company with other children that he cannot have everything he desires, and that his actions must take others into account. The habit of consideration for others, like other habits, is developed through exercise, and is a matter of gradual growth. The child does not become considerate all at once, but he builds considerateness through many experiences which call for it. These experiences may begin at an early age, as the following illustrations show.

In the first grade class at the Ethical Culture School, little Richard had finished the reading lesson with his group, but instead of settling down in the "Library" at the other side of the room, he rushed about importantly, and several times interrupted

1. Sweet, Helen F. and Fahs, Sophia L. Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds, P. 22
2. Morgan, J. J. B.: Psychology of the Un adjusted School Child.

the circle group. When finally he was dismissed with a reprimand, the teacher said in a low tone to the reading circle, "What shall we do with Richard?"

"Put him out," suggested one.

"Cut out his tongue," replied another.

"Well," answered the teacher, "if we cut out tongues, I wonder whose would be cut out first?"

"I guess mine," admitted the child.

If a "moral" might be attached to this observation, it would be to the effect that we must be willing to expect from ourselves the conduct we desire in others.

Another situation arose during the morning which gave an opportunity for exercising consideration. It was time for the mid-morning lunch. While one child was passing the napkins, another took her chair. She said rather rudely, "That's my chair. Get off."

The teacher asked if something else might have been said, and there were several suggestions, ending with "Please, John, that is my chair. Won't you get another?" This the little girl repeated to John, and he quickly responded.

What teacher of younger children has not been frequently perplexed by their wriggling and moving about! How much "overflow activity" can be overlooked? The following situation describes how one class solved its own problem.

In the third grade class at the Union School of Religion, one of the girls said that she had something to tell that her mother had said after visiting the class the previous Sunday. "Her mother felt that the children wriggled and moved about in a way that did not help the

discussion. She told Janet afterward that she hoped Janet would sit quietly when the other children tilted their chairs and wriggled. The teacher asked the children what they thought of the mother's criticism?

Jean said, 'Well, I don't see why it isn't all right to wriggle around a little bit as long as you are listening and interested. You can't just sit like a bump on a log all morning.'

Philip said, 'I think it's all right to move a little, too. You get awful tired of just sitting still every minute.'

'It isn't courteous to be moving all around when people are talking,' said Janet taking her mother's side.

'You might disturb other people and keep them from hearing,' added John.

The teacher asked if they felt that the way Robert and Philip had been folding and tearing paper the Sunday before was a good plan. The rest agreed that by doing so the boys had distracted the attention of the others. The teacher asked what they thought of deciding such matters as these according to whether or not the thing they were doing disturbed others or kept anyone from hearing what was going on.

'It's all right to move around a little,' answered Jean. 'We squirm sometimes when we are most interested, but if we're doing anything that bothers people we had better not do it.'"

As children develop, they should be increasingly able to decide situations for themselves, and to have less need of adult supervision. The Ten Year Olds at the City and Country School were quite accustomed to have their teacher out of the room a large part of the time. When minor matters of discipline came up in the teacher's

absence, they were quickly settled by group approval and disapproval. One such situation concerned the right of a little girl to keep her own property. She had a fine art gum eraser, and another girl wanted it. When the owner refused to give it up, the would-be borrower tried to take it forcibly. There were calls from the others: "Whose eraser is it?"

"Hers," said the aggressor, "but I only want to use it."

"She doesn't have to lend it if she doesn't want to," was the verdict.

Dependability

Still another habit to be developed through group experience is dependability. It is not by telling, but by conduct in actual situations that the individual and the group as a whole learn to live up to what is expected of them.

We have referred to the group organization of the Ten Year Olds at the City and Country School, of the confidence of their teacher in them to carry on their work as effectively in her absence as in her presence. But how about a less mature group? An interesting situation was observed in the first Grade of the Ethical Culture School.

The music period was over, and the music teacher had left the room. The first Grade teacher did not return for over ten minutes and the children were left alone. They had an active, noisy time for awhile, imitating different musical instruments. Then, one child went to the chimes in a corner of the room and played them; the noise stopped and the children sat quietly. The playing of the chimes was the agreed signal for order, and

whenever the group became too noisy, some child would go to the chimes. There was a group pride in having the signal given but once, and when one little girl played the chimes twice, their protest was "We heard you the first time."

In these situations, we find children learning group dependability; the following illustrations concern the individual in the group.

In the third grade class at the Union School of Religion, Philip and Jean were chosen, one Sunday morning, to lead the class down the stairs and to the chapel. The children were not very orderly, but the teacher said nothing about it at the time. "On returning to the classroom, the teacher asked the group what they thought of Philip and Jean, their leaders to and from chapel.

'They weren't very good,' said Elizabeth. 'They rushed out of the elevator before the younger classes did, and they made a noise.'

Jean said, 'Well, I don't ever want to have Philip for a partner again. He acted so silly and tried to say I was the Queen of France.'

'I know we weren't any good,' admitted Philip, 'and I don't ever want to lead again.'

The teacher, feeling that Philip was perhaps running away from his responsibility rather than trying to face it, said to the class, 'What do you think of Philip's saying he doesn't want to lead again?'

'That is foolish,' said Janet. 'He ought to see how well he can lead another time.'

The teacher asked what should be expected of people who were

selected as leaders.

'We can expect them to be dependable,' was Janet's idea.

'Well, I'll lead once more and show you if you want me to,' said Philip, stepping back into the picture."[1]

On another occasion there was a similar question in regard to leadership.

John and Robert were the leaders that day, and John came in for much criticism. (John was president of the class). After a recreation period when John had made himself unpopular by rough play, and had called forth some disagreeable remarks, the teacher suggested that the children look for their reasons in what they had said and done.

"Jean said, 'Well, I think we should elect a new president to-day. John hits me all the time, and when I fell down coming up the stairs he laughed at me.'

'It may not have been polite for John to do that,' admitted the teacher, 'but are those the things which make him a poor leader?'

'No, it was mean of him to laugh, though,' said Jean. 'I think the way he nearly got us run over by a streetcar because he didn't watch the policeman was pretty bad.'

'Well, I think John is all right, and I want him still to be president,' said Robert befriending him.

'We must be careful to keep this very clear,' interposed the teacher. 'We want to find out any charges against John as a leader. We don't want to pick on him for personal reasons.' She suggested

1. Sweet, Helen F. and Fahs, Sophia L.: Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds, P. 11.

to John that he speak for himself.'

'All that they say is true,' he said. 'I think I had better not be president any more. I don't think I have the right habits. I know I hit people sometimes and I don't know why I do. Sometimes they hit me first and sometimes I hit them first. I just feel like doing it, that's all.'"

Then after discussing the matter a little longer,--

"'Well, I'm willing to give John one more chance,' said Philip, perhaps remembering the second chance he had once been given himself.

All the others agreed to this except Jean and Elizabeth who felt John had had his chance and failed. Since they asked the teacher for her opinion, she said she felt it would be fairer to give John another chance to make good. So John was given one more chance." [1]

These illustrations are sufficient to indicate the opportunities in life-experiences for developing desirable social habits. Situations of a similar nature are familiar to every teacher;--they are frequently termed problems and perplexities, but might they not be seen as promising opportunities?

.....

In the present chapter we have endeavored to describe several experiments with curricula based on children's interests and experiences. With the use of illustrations drawn from at least six school situations, some of the factors involved in such a curriculum have been indicated. In these school situations, various methods are being practised to discover children's

1. Sweet, Helen F. and Fahs, Sophia L.: Exploring Religion with Eight Year Olds, Pp. 37-38.

real interests, but no one method seems to be superior or entirely successful. There is particular need for further experimentation at this point.

In each school the direction and outline of the curriculum is planned in advance by the director (or principal) and teachers, or by the director alone. The situations represent varying degrees of freedom in the developing of that program by teacher and pupils. While the "set-program" is open to criticism in an experiment with a project curriculum, it is held that it is acceptable under certain conditions, namely:--when it seeks to find and to build on children's interests appropriate for each period of development; when the program is flexible and subject to change with new knowledge of children's needs; when it allows for a degree of freedom of choice for the children; and allows for a recognition of, and the development of spontaneous interests which may arise in the program.

In the project method the role of the teacher has a new significance, for her concern is for the fullest possible development of individual and social values in her pupils. Subject matter is a secondary consideration. Her position is that of discoverer, inspirer, guide, helper and friend.

In the schools observed, freedom of movement depended only in part on building facilities, while limitation of equipment seemed to be a greater factor with the religious education schools than with the day-schools. Some evidence was given in support of developing intellectual freedom, while the maintaining of an atmosphere of freedom to question was considered particularly important.

In the illustrations given of group experience, there seemed to be confirming proof of the position that in real life situations will be found significant opportunities for developing desirable social values.

CHAPTER III

SOME IMPLICATIONS AND PROBLEMS OF THE PROJECT METHOD IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. EMPHASIS ON EXPERIENCE

a. One of the implications of the project method in relation to religious education is the emphasis on experience. The value of the educational process is to be judged by the experience of the learner, rather than by subject-matter learned, or by the success with which a teacher carries through a pre-conceived plan of instruction. The concern is whether the learner is helped to meet problems and needs in his present experience, rather than in teaching ideals and principles of conduct with the expectation that these will become effective in future living.

b. The experience of the learner is continuous with the learner's previous experience in the sense that school projects must take their start from within the area of the present interests and problems of the learner. While it is here that projects must begin, it is felt to be one function of the school project, to lead the child into new areas of experience through the guided development of his interests. This direction and enrichment of the learner's interests provides for his increasing growth in worthy living.

c. The experience of the learner in school projects should also relate back to, and modify the experience of the learner in other situations. This is especially true in religious education, if religious education is conceived as growth in ability to view all the experiences of life in their relationships to each other and with an understanding of their meaning. In this case, the projects of religious education may be expected to draw their content from the areas of experience of greatest importance to the learner and, in turn, to modify the later experience of

the learner in these areas.

d. The learner participates throughout in the purposing and planning of his activities, as well as in their execution and judgment. Broad areas of experience may be designated by the school, if they are based on an adequate knowledge of children's interests, within which areas projects for a given group should be chosen. The teacher always acts as a guide, helping the children to choose from among their own many interests and problems, those which promise to lead on into ever-widening interests and activities. Whenever a group project is selected, there is always a considerable amount of give-and-take between individuals, and the project is chosen which promises the most for the entire group. But even with these limitations, it remains true that the purposeful co-operation of all learners in planning, execution and judgment constitutes the essence and educational significance of the project.

Problems for Research:

a. There is need for more studies of the interests, abilities, and problems of children at all age-levels. Careful, scientific child study may be carried on through the co-operation of many agencies. The home, the day school, the church school, and the organizations of child guidance and welfare, may contribute to, and benefit by, this research. There is also a need to study the growth of the child's social capacities,--the range of his social interests and the most desirable and effective time for widening these--so that this knowledge may guide in the selection of projects.

b. A second problem is the consideration of religious experience. What is religious experience? Does it differ and how, from all other experience?

Does religious experience consist not so much in a unique experience, as in an attitude toward the whole of experience? How does the conception of religious experience influence educational method?

c. There is a need for a study of the development of religious experience from earliest childhood to maturity. This should include various types of religious experience, with a study of environmental factors, beliefs, and modes of expression. Careful case studies would doubtless be valuable contributions in this field. A further need is for the discovery of the real religious capacities of children as distinct from their verbal assent to adult-imposed forms. How may these capacities be ascertained, and when known, how may they be used in directing the child's religious experience?

2. REVISION OF CURRICULUM MATERIAL

a. With the experience of the learner as the keynote, the curriculum becomes a series of enterprises in which the learner engages. Related to curriculum material, this means that instead of arranging subject material in "lessons" to be taught serially, subject matter is to be so organized that it may be used as it is needed in the here-and-now experience. The value of a social and religious heritage is in how these may enrich the present. Material, then, must be so prepared that it will help youth to carry out activities, to solve problems, and to enrich the whole of experience.

This view of the use of subject matter has stimulated many experiments in curriculum making, as well as the revision of present programs. In 1928, the International Graded Lesson Series published the first courses of a curriculum which represent significant changes when compared with its 1918 revision. However, the new curriculum does not plan to start with the present interests of the child; it

is only partly life-centered, but it seeks to consider and relate to certain aspects of the child's experience.

An interesting experiment is being made by the Epworth League of the Methodist Church, in preparing material which will be available for discussing present problems. A list of 100 or more situations was sent out to a large number of young people throughout the country, to discover which areas were nearest to the interests of young people. On the basis of the replies, "units" of material are being prepared relating to the problems which received the highest ranking. Each unit is complete in itself. Both in form-organization and content, the units are intended to be suggestive, and are adaptable to the needs of a particular group. It is possible to build a curriculum on the basis of the interests and problems of a group, within the limits set by the materials provided. An advantage of this material is that it permits a flexible curriculum, as units may be taken up in any desired order. One limitation, however, is that the units are planned for discussions only.

b. The planning of a new curriculum which shall help the learner to carry out his own enterprises waits again on a study of children's interests, needs, and problems. A knowledge of these is essential before curriculum material can be adequately planned to relate to them.

An earlier reference was made to the attempt of the International Council of Religious Education, to discover children's interests through the reporting of experiences. Parents, teachers, and other group leaders are being urged to record their observations of children's behavior.[1] This effort may give a great deal of helpful

1. See Appendix for Form for Recording.

information, but there should be an awareness to any tendency, on the part of observers, to overemphasize problem situations.

c. An important problem relating to curriculum revision concerns the use of the Bible. It is felt that the place and use of the Bible will depend largely on the objectives of religious education held by the educating group. These may be:

(1) The acceptance of certain beliefs and doctrines as a means to salvation--in which case, the Bible, as the authoritative record of these beliefs and doctrines, will have the central place as subject matter to be learned. (Even in this case, certain parts of the Bible will be selected.)

(2) The development of Christ-like character or a Christian way of life, on the assumption that authoritative directions for this are contained in the New Testament, or in selected parts thereof. These parts are still used in an authoritarian way.

(3) The development of ability and disposition to live in a religious way in relation to the problems and relationships of one's own time. Personality values are placed first, and there is an endeavor to view all acts in a universal setting, and in their relationships to all other persons affected, seeking for the meaning of life as a whole, and attempting to relate our individual acts to this meaning. In this case, the Bible will be introduced as evidence and helpful data, the teachings and examples of religious geniuses such as Jesus, the great prophets, and the psalmists being given a preferred position.

The type of objectives will determine both the teaching method and the curriculum material. It is doubted whether the project principle can be followed in those situations where objectives of the first two

types are held. For these objectives reflect a conception of religion which is static. The great revelations and figures are all in the past; it is the part of the present generation to accept and follow them.

To those those objectives are of the third type, religion is an ever-developing reality, its revelations continue, and its tasks are unfinished. In the words of Professor Coe, "The Christian religion can employ problem-project teaching consistently and effectively only to the extent that Christianity itself is a problem and an unfinished task."[1] And again,--"When Christian education determines its whole complex of policies by contemplating the unfinished tasks of the Kingdom, it will become a process wherein the learner forms judgments of his own concerning the present and future of our religion and of life, it will turn him away from comfortable conventionality to the excitement and labor of hard causes; it will unite him with his fellows on the basis of a forward look rather than upon the present basis of backward and inward looks; and it will give him the thrill, during his growing years, of being a co-creator with God."[2]

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENT CO-OPERATION

a. In any educational program, the desires of the parents constitute a factor which should be considered. Parents have given over to the church the chief responsibility for the religious education of their children, but this does not mean a separation from the home,--its influences, attitudes, and beliefs. Moreover, parents frequently have definite ideas of what they wish their children taught. Any change in emphasis and method in religious education should provide for enlisting

1. Coe, G. A.: What Is Christian Education, P. 189.
2. Ibid. P. 166.

parents' active co-operation.

b. The necessity of educating parents along with children means a much slower rate of transition in method and program, but it promises a surer growth. An attempt to move forward with the children without allowing for parental understanding stands a chance of failure.

c. There is a further reason for seeking parents' participation: Real life concerns both children and adults, and includes many child-adult relationships. In school programs, there has too often been a gap between children and adults, as though their experiences were divided. There is a need for encouraging activities which will bring children and adults together in an atmosphere of mutual give-and-take. This promises a continuing experience of growth for the adult and a satisfaction in participation for the child. Project teaching, according to Professor Coe, "unifies the young and the old through present, not merely prospective, co-operation in thinking, choosing, and doing. Therefore it requires plasticity on the part of the old as well as the young, and hence necessitates adult Christian education that has no limit."[1]

4. THE NECESSITY FOR TRAINED TEACHERS

a. Project teaching requires that the teacher have a knowledge of the psychological factors of the learning process, and the conditions under which learning takes place most effectively. Moreover, she must be able to make use of those factors and conditions in guiding her own teaching.

b. The teacher must understand the meaning of the entire process of education through the project method. There is not much significance to isolated projects; the teacher needs to so guide the program that

1. Coe, G. A.: What Is Christian Education, P. 190.

projects are correlated, the one leading on to the next. Lack of wise and informed guidance on the part of the teacher may result in learning undesirable habits, such as wasting time and effort, being busy about trivialities, easy acceptance of products of activity without judgment or appraisal. The teacher should beware of the danger of confusing activity with growth.

c. The teacher must understand how to guide children in constructive activities,--in experiences of creativity, activity, and appreciation, as well as in problem solving and discussion.

d. Project teaching requires time for adequate preparation of material. The teacher must be alive to all the "leads" and possibilities of projects, and by anticipating interests, be ready to furnish information, point out relationships, and lead on to new experiences.

e. Project teaching requires time that the teacher may come to know the members of her group as individuals. She needs to know their several abilities, their particular needs and interests, their home backgrounds. Only as she has this knowledge is she able to direct the program and her efforts so that the individual is reached.

f. The problem in religious education is to secure trained leaders who will be willing to give the necessary time. For the most part, church schools have to rely upon volunteer teachers, and it is a question of choosing from leaders who are available. There is a need to survey the church membership and the community for teaching prospects. For those who respond to an appeal, but who need special training, a teacher-training class may be instituted.

g. In emphasizing trained teachers, one must be watchful of those persons who have been thoroly trained in old methods so that they cannot

shift to new. Project teaching requires an experimental attitude, a willingness to try new ways, and to change when necessary.

h. In a situation where project teaching is being tried, inexperienced teachers may be greatly helped by the director or superintendent, through supervision and conferences. Staff conferences also give educative opportunities. These plans were used at the Union School of Religion with good results. A third plan consisted in providing suggestions for activities, and lists of source materials; also in pointing out important behavior problems and raising research questions. These were included in the "Suggested Curricular Areas" for the year.[1]

5. THE DETERMINATION OF ENDS

In building curricula on the experience of the learner, there is a tendency in practice to direct the program within certain areas of experience. The direction which any program takes is determined by the educating group. As an example of this control, the following experiment is cited. The International Council of Religious Education is proposing a new curriculum "to consist of the actual experiences and activities of growing persons." In a preliminary statement issued in 1928,[1] the underlying principles of their position and program were expressed by the Council. It is held that religious education concerns itself with the experience of growing persons. It is the object of education to introduce control into experience in the light of Christian ends. Not every experience is of equal value. It is the function of the teacher to select the more significant experiences of the learner, help him to analyze these situations, to recognize the various factors in them, to see the consequences of different kinds of responses to

1. See Appendix for "Suggested Curricular Areas", 1928-1929
2. The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education. Research Bulletin, NO. 5, International Council of Religious Education, 1928.

them, to bring to bear all factors essential to adequate control, and to secure responses in the light of Christian living.

This position reflecting predetermined ends raises certain questions:

a. It is assumed that what constitutes Christian living is known, and that it only remains to guide experience in that direction. But in truth, there are various interpretations of what Christian living is, with interpreters claiming priority for their positions. With this curriculum each group would determine the "Christian ends" to which experience would be directed. In this defining of objectives it is implied that the learner would have no participation.

b. The proposed curriculum of the International Council should include a study of "Christian living", based on Biblical records in the light of historical research, the development of Christian thought since the time of Jesus, up to and including the interpretations of present day Christians.

c. If a study such as this reveals that the interpretation of Christian living is a matter of development, then there should be a recognition of, and provision for, further development in the light of new knowledge and changed circumstances. "Christian ends" will be flexible, not fixed.

d. The learner should have the freedom to contribute to this reconstruction of ends as he progresses in knowledge and experience. This implies, on the part of the educating group, an openness to criticism and a welcome to re-evaluation.

CONCLUSION:

In the first two chapters, the theory of the project method and its practice in a number of experimental situations were described.

But this discussion left us with many unsolved problems on our hands, and with many further implications to be pointed out, particularly in the field of religious education. To state these problems and implications has been the aim of the concluding chapter. Any discussion of the project method necessarily ends on this note of problems yet to be solved, experiments yet to be undertaken. This is as true in public school education as in religious education. In both fields the project method is on the frontier of progress and it is a frontier of which many areas remain to be explored.

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APPENDIX

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Form for discovering interests, problems.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?

Series of Character and Personality Tests
Association Press
New York

Directions:

Below are stated some things which certain young people want. Somebody thinks that would make life more worth while so far as he personally is concerned. How do you feel about it?

If it doesn't matter especially to you, is not worth putting much time on, put a zero (0) in front of it.

If you find yourself really interested in any item, put a check (✓) in front of it.

If it seems to you tremendously important and valuable and necessary for you personally, then put a double check (✓ ✓) in front of it.

You are not to sign your name.

There are no "best" answers except your own honest and sincere judgment.

Personal Data:

A few facts will help make the study more useful, if you care to give them.

1. Age_____ 2. Sex_____ 3. Are you living at home?_____

4. If in school, what year? _____

5. If at work, what sort of work? _____

6. Which of the following groups are you now connected with?

A club of the same sex____ Church _____
A "mixed" club _____ Sunday School_____
Athletic team _____ Young People's Society_____
Missionary organization____ Choir_____
YMCA_____ YWCA_____

Other organization _____

7. Do you think you are most interested in:

a. Ideas, books, etc., or

b. people, social activities, etc., or

c. things, machinery, etc.?_____

Which are you least interested in?_____

_____ 1. Getting a better method for handling or preventing disagreements with your parents.

_____ 2. More and better dancing.

_____ 3. Helping get rid of war in the world.

_____ 4. Helping produce plays, acting in them.

_____ 5. Finding a true answer to some questions about God.

_____ 6. Writing short stories.

_____ 7. Discussing modern affairs, like politics, or other matters in the newspapers.

_____ 8. Learning more about etiquette, the approved methods of meeting people and taking part in social life.

_____ 9. Getting acquainted with types of boys different from those you now know.

_____10. Getting acquainted with types of girls different from those you now know.

_____11. Becoming more attractive to the opposite sex.

_____12. Getting a chance to hear more good music.

_____13. Working out some method for getting rid of the "cheating" problem at school.

_____14. Getting training for a better job.

_____15. Discussing prohibition.

_____16. Getting along better with your brothers and sisters.

_____17. Getting better movies.

_____18. Getting more chances to go to the movies.

____19. Deciding about college.

____20. Making things (underline those which appeal to you most): woodwork, metal work, dress design, leather work, hammered brass or copper, woodcuts or linoleum cuts or engraving.

____21. Improving in cooking skill.

____22. Going on more hikes.

____23. Learning how to dance better.

____24. Improving local town or city government.

____25. Understanding socialism and other plans for improving economic life.

____26. Making school more practical and interesting.

____27. Becoming one of the best dressed persons in my group.

____28. Joining a club of young people who can plan things and do things together.

____29. Getting more, or more interesting, books to read.

____30. Getting rid of the "blues" - feelings of discouragement.

____31. Helping get rid of poverty in the world.

____32. Learning more about, and getting more opportunity to enjoy, good art.

____33. Getting better acquainted with persons from other races or countries.

____34. Choosing a satisfactory life-work.

____35. Fitting Bible stories with the facts and theories of modern science.

____36. Playing more or better basketball.

____37. Getting more chance to drive an automobile.

____38. Understanding evolution, how the earth and plants, animals and humans, developed.

____39. Thinking through some puzzling questions in sex relations.

____40. Finding a way to make a little money in part time work.

_____41. Playing more or better baseball, or football.

_____42. More chance to play good tennis.

_____43. Going to a show which is very funny.

_____44. Getting a clearer idea of the life of Jesus.

_____45. Writing poems.

_____46. Experimenting with radio, television, etc.

_____47. Improving ability to play some musical instrument. (Which, especially?)_____

_____48. More parties.

_____49. Doing gymnasium work.

_____50. Getting a swimming pool for all-year around use.

_____51. Understanding about death, immortality, heaven, and hell.

_____52. Singing in quartets or choruses, improving singing voice.

_____53. Going hunting.

_____54. Becoming a better boxer or wrestler.

_____55. Understanding the farm problem and doing something to make life in the country better.

_____56. Learning some games and stunts which will make parties more fun.

_____57. Getting an experience of prayer that is wholly reasonable and that means something to you.

_____58. Taking photos or movies.

_____59. Getting to be a better bridge-player.

_____60. Learning how to preside properly in meetings.

_____61. Getting over feeling angry at a certain person.

_____62. Being elected to important positions.

_____63. Smoking.

_____64. Making more real friends.

_____65. Making baskets, reed-work, weaving, etc.

_____66. Getting more time to do the reading you have been wanting to do.

_____67. Providing periods of silence - to enjoy it and to think things through calmly.

_____68. Getting over a feeling that you are very inferior to certain other persons.

_____69. Proving to the world your real ability.

_____70. Working out, or enjoying, better services of worship.

_____71. Listening to an informing speech telling you a lot you didn't know about (underline those you are most interested in, if any):

a. Scientific things
b. Travel, other lands
c. Philosophy
d. Business affairs
e. Labor problems
f. Art
g. Literature
h. Religion
i. Current events
j. Sex
k. Psychology
l. Education, schools, teaching
m. Missions
n. Lives of great people
o. Raising children
p. Crime
q. _____

_____72. Getting better health - more physical energy.

_____73. Getting to know Nature: rocks, hills, trees, birds, animals, clouds, etc.

_____74. Understanding birth control.

_____75. Learning about other religions, what they believe and how they live.

Now, even the many questions suggested here, do not represent all of your real interests. So you are asked to write an answer to each of the following five questions.

I. What questions puzzle you most? What would you be most interested in discussing with other young people or with someone who could give you dependable knowledge and guidance?

_____

_____

_____

II. What things that you enjoy doing would you most like more chance to do?

_____

_____

_____

III. What things that you enjoy by yourself would you most like to share with a group of others having the same interest?

_____

_____

_____

IV. As you look at the world around you, thinking of what it is and what it might be, what would you most like to see changed? What causes would you most want to help work at?

_____

_____

_____

V. Do you think of any other remarks that might help individual adults and organizations dealing with young people to understand better your life - your needs - your <u>real</u> interests?

RECORD OF SITUATION AND RESPONSE

Objective Observation

International Council of Religious Education
5 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

(Follow carefully the directions on accompanying sheet entitled "Instructions to Observers.")

)ate or dates of your observation*_____
(Give month, day, and year.)

)ate of recording_____
(Give month, day, and year.)

'our (the observer's) relation to the person or group that was

)bserved _____

Name of person observed_____
(Or Initials, or Code.)

Kind of group observed_____
(When a group is observed state what kind: class, club, scouts, etc.)

Age of person:____yrs.____mos., or age limits in the group observed: from____to____. Sex:__male__female__mixed group.
(Check proper space.)

ITUATION: *A careful and detailed account of the experience observed. Objective factors. What was done and said, etc., to which the person (or group) made a response. Place. People present. Important circumstances and previous happenings.*

RESPONSE: *What the observed person (or group) did or said in response to the situation.* (*This may be included with the* ***situation*** *above.*)

IMPORTANT FACTS *about the person's (or group's) home life, school life, play life, occupation, religious life, etc.* (*See instructions for details.*)
Religion (*if other than Protestant*)_____*Nationality and Race (if other than native born white)*_____
Grade in school_____*Grade in church school*_____*Place of experience: Name of post office, and*
state_____, __*Rural* __*Village* __*Town* __*City (check proper space). Add other important facts.*

(Use reverse side for additional statements, if necessary.)

Name of observer_____ Address_____
(Name and address may be omitted, if desired.)

*If your report is on a recalled (remembered) observation and not a "direct objective observation", record as nearly as possible the exact date of observation. Also check the square and the proper space below.

☐ Recalled Observation. I remember_____ very distinctly_____ quite distinctly_____ vaguely.

SITUATION RECORDS AND TEACHING PROCEDURES

Department of Research and Service
International Council of Religious Education
5 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois

Instructions to Leaders

This report form is suggested for use by teachers whenever, in the teaching process, they make use of situations and responses which actually occur in the experience of their pupils. It may also be used by parents or other leaders in the guidance of groups or individuals. One or more Record of Situation and Response reports should always be used with this form.

These reports will not be used as a test of your teaching ability. You are invited to share in testing a teaching method, viz. using actual situations and responses of pupils in your teaching procedure.

Be sure that each Record of Situation and Response form is filled out as completely as possible.

Fill out carefully the information asked for at the top of this Situation Records and Teaching Procedures form.

Types of Teaching Procedure

This outline for reports is intended to be suggestive only. There is no desire to pre-determine for you one procedure in preference to another, nor to limit you to a certain order of teaching steps, or stages. It will be of help to others, however, first of all to know your answer to the first question in the body of the report, and to have specific statements from you as to objectives, or aims. An exact record of source material used will also be valuable.

Beyond following these simple directions we hope you will feel free to add a great deal of detailed information on the teaching methods which you used, the order in which you proceeded, the response of the learner, etc. This may be added in the order and form suggested, or in some other way.

The types of teaching procedure suggested are, of course, not mutually exclusive. For example, in most activities the problem procedure sooner or later fills a very definite need, or again a worship plan may find its place in either or both of the other types of procedure suggested. A leader's plan may involve primarily a type "A" procedure with elements of types "B" and "C" and other types added, in which case the report might be given under "A", but also in part under "B", "C", and "D", or the entire report could be given under "D", "Other, or Additional Teaching Procedures Used." You will want to indicate the relationship between the various teaching methods which you used. You may attach additional sheets of paper ($8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inches), with detailed reports to this form if you wish.

Under "Steps or Stages in Your Teaching Procedure" you may wish to indicate the successive stages of your teaching enterprise as you carried it to completion.

Form C. I. 202 400 6-28

SITUATION RECORDS AND TEACHING PROCEDURES

Group (Class, club, etc.) _____ Ages: From ____ To ____
Or Individual (Name, or Initials.) _____ Age: ____ Years ____ Months
Grade in Public School _____ Grade in Church School _____
Sex: ___ Male ___ Female ___ Mixed Group. (Check the proper space.)
Institution [1] _____
Address of Institution _____
Leader's Name and Address _____
Leader's Relation to Group, or Individual, Reported On _____
Date, or Dates, of Teaching Activity [2] _____

Do Not Write In This Space

What element, or elements, in the situation and response record did you deal wit for teaching purposes, and why?

Objectives, or Aims.

Types of Teaching Procedures

A. Project Procedure.

Activities the Group, or Individual, Engaged In. (Kind of, purpose, how started, how carried forward, accomplishments, etc.)

Additional Activities Started, or Planned For. (Kind of, purpose, how started, plans made, etc.)

Outcome.[3]

1 Sunday, weekday, vacation church school, or home, or other institution or organization.
2 Use separate report forms for each class session, whenever possible.
3 Give objective evidence, when you can, of (1) work done, judgments and evaluations of the process and product; (2) results of learning in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, habits, appreciations, ideals; (3) further work started, or plans made.

B. Problem Procedure. (Conduct problems, intellectual, or emotional difficulties.)

The Learner's Problem. (Its nature; specific statement of.)

How did the group, or individual, come to face this problem, and how was the analysis and definition of the problem arrived at?

Methods Used in Dealing With the Problem. (Story, problem discussion, study of "cases", etc.)

Related Problems Faced by the Group, or Individual, with Plans for Solution.

Outcome. (See note on page 2)

C. Worship Procedure.

Needs of the Group, or Individual, Which Call for Worship Procedures.

How were these needs revealed?

Worship Methods Used. (For__classroom work__assembly work__individual work. Check proper space and describe in detail.)

How are these methods related to other enterprises undertaken?

Outcome. (See note on page 2.)

D. Other, or Additional Teaching Procedures Used. (Dramatics, pageantry, service plans, etc.

Source Materials Used. (Stories, pictures, books, etc.: indicate author, artist, title, publisher, last copyright date, chapter, page, where materials may be secured, etc.; underscore the sources used which were of greatest value:

Special Equipment Used. (Maps, exhibits, other materials.)

Steps or Stages in Your Teaching Procedure.

If you were to carry through this or a similar plan with the same group, or individual, what changes would you make?

Remarks:

Date of This Report _____

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

Will you please rate each problem on the list, as follows:

2.....if it is of such real interest to you that you want it discussed
1.....if it is of interest to you, so that you are willing to have it discussed if others want it
0.....if you are not interested, or for some other reason prefer not to have it discussed

I. Problems of Student Life

1. How is the Christian standard of conduct different?
How is a Christian student different?
What is "Jesus way of life"?
What does it mean in practice to "take Jesus in earnest"?

2. What are we in college for?
Who is a success in college, according to accepted standards?
Do these standards represent the most important things in college life?
What place should a student give to studies? to student activities? to social life?

3. Do all students have a fair chance to get the most out of college life?
If not, what obstacles keep them from this?
How should college conditions be changed to give a fair chance to all? who can change them?

4. What are the values of fraternities and sororities?
In what ways are they undesirable?
Should they be abolished? encouraged to continue as they are? changed? -- and if so, in what ways? who can change them?

5. How far should custom determine our conduct?
When must we break with campus traditions?
Shall we always observe rules and laws?

6. To what shall we be loyal?
How is loyalty best expressed? how developed?
What shall we do when loyalities conflict?
(e.g. loyalty to the fraternity and loyalty to the university)

7. How shall we use our leisure time?
What is worth-while recreation?
What shall we do on Sunday?

8. How shall we treat persons of other races and nationalities?
Should we admit them to our fraternities and sororities? to our honor societies? to our homes?
What values in closer social relationships with them? What dangers?

9. How honest shall we be?
What is wrong with cheating and bluffing?
Why then do students cheat?
Is the system wrong, or the students?
What is the best way to develop desirable habits of honesty?

10. What are the most desirable relationships between men and women during college years?
What conditions favor the realization of such relationships?
What conditions make their realization difficult?
How can these conditions be changed?
What scientific information regarding sex and its role in life should a young man or a young woman have, and where can this be found in trustworthy form?

11. How is one's life work discovered?
What factors should be taken into account in making this choice?
Where can one get the facts needed for such a choice?
What sort of counsel should one seek from others?

In problems 2 to 11, we shall ask also: "Is there a Christian standard of conduct with reference to this problem? If so, what is it? What would it mean to put this standard into practice?"

II. Problems of Religious Thought

12. What is religion? What makes a person religious?
How does religion differ from morality? Is religion necessary for morality?
How can we test the truth of religion?

13. Where can we find authority or certainty in religion? In the Bible? In the church? In experience--if so, of what kind?
Can we ever have final certainty?

14. What is salvation? From what are we saved? To what? How are we saved?
What is sin? Is sin always punished? Can God forgive sins? How? What does it mean to be "saved from sin"?

15. How shall we think of God?
How do the findings of modern science influence our conception of God?
What is God's relationship to man?
What is an "experience of God"?

16. What may Jesus mean to us today?
How can we "make Jesus a real personality" in our present experience?
What is Jesus' cause in the world? What is our relation to this cause?

17. Is Christianity the "final religion"? What do we mean by "final religion"?
Have the other living religions their own distincitive contributions to make to the religious experience of mankind?
What hope is there that the world can be made Christian?
Should we try to make the world Christian?
Why do other religions send missionaries to the United States?

18. What is prayer? What good does it do to pray?
For what should we pray? For what should we not pray?

19. After death, what? Can we believe that life does not end?

20. Why is there so much pain and suffering?
What solutions does religion offer to this problem?
Are these solutions adequate?

21. Are we really free, or are our actions predetermined?
What are the answers of psychology, philosophy, and theology to this problem?
What difference does it make?

22. Is religion simply a projection of human values realized in other experiences of life, or does it create new values? If religion may be creative, what makes it so and how can it be made more creative?

23. Are modern science and religion necessarily incompatible?
What is the "scientific method"? What changes in religion would result from the application of the scientific method in religion?
Is the scientific approach to reality the only valid approach?
If not, what other approaches are there?
What do you think of the statement frequently heard: "Religion and science do not conflict because they deal with entirely separate realms"?

24. What is the place of the Bible in the religion of a modern Christian? To what extent is it a source of authority?
What other uses may it have? What do we mean by the historical approach to the Bible? How shall we evaluate any portion of the Bible for our use today? What is revelation? Inspiration?

25. What is worship? Is it a necessary part of religious experience?
What worship experiences are of greatest worth?
What is the place of the beautiful in worship?

26. Does religion stand times of supreme testing?
Is religion "an excape from reality" or does it give us deeper insight into the meaning of the crises of life?

III. Problems of Religion in the Modern World

27. Why all this talk about "a new industrial order"?
What is wrong with conditions in industry at present?
What changes are needed?
What has Christianity to do with industry? What would a "Christian industrial order" be like? Is such a thing practicable? If so, how can it be brought about?
How can students work for a better industrial order?

28. Where shall we stand on war?
What influences today are tending toward another war? What influences are making for peace?
What has Christianity to do with war? How can Christians work most effectively for peace?
What can students do?

29. What do you think of the statement, often made, the "religion has nothing to do with politics"?
What should be the relationship of the churches and the state?
Can we be "100 per cent Americans" and Christians at the same time? What shall we do when loyalties conflict?

30. What is democracy? Is it something more than a theory of political organization?
Is democracy possible in the government? in industry? in education? in the home? in the church? To what extent is it now realized in each of these institutions?
What has Christianity to do with democracy?

31. Do we need a new church? If so, why? What kind? What is wrong with our churches today?
Can existing churches be modified to meet the demands of the modern world? If so, how?
Do we need any churches at all? Or: can civilization dispense with religion and continue on the basis of science and scientific ethics?

32. What hope is there that relationships between races can be made Christian? Specifically: between whites and Negroes; between Gentiles and Jews in our large Eastern cities; between occidentals and Japanese on the Pacific coast. What do we mean by "Christian relationships" in this respect?
Where do our churches stand?

33. Shall the churches continue their missionary enterprises?
Or shall they abandon foreign missions and give their attention to Christianizing social relationships at home?
What would be a desirable plan for foreign missionary efforts in the future?

UNION SCHOOL OF RELIGION - 1928-1929

SUGGESTED CURRICULAR AREAS

Nursery
Kindergarten
Grade I

HOME LIFE

Purpose:

To enrich the children's experiences thru direct and vicarious experiences with types of homes other than those they already know.

To broaden their appreciations of other children, and other parents and home customs and ideals, and to stir within them a desire to consider the problems of this larger world in their total picture of life.

To help the children to face more objectively their own home problems of adjustment in relation to parents and other children in the family and other social groups.

To create situations in which a sensitiveness to the holiness in human life may emerge and grow and a desire to achieve it, such as situations in which kinship with other children and grown ups is realized in longings and wonderings leading toward a better understanding of this universe and of life and toward finer solutions of life's problems.

Children's Curiosities and Desires on which to Build:

Curiosity about people who are different.
Curiosity about the whyness of what is about them, what has been and what is going to be.
The children's secret goals. (See Dr. Adler's book "Understanding Human Nature").

Some Possible Direct Contacts for Learning:

Exchange of visits in homes - in immediate neighborhood among our own group.
Exchange of visits with Negro families, east side homes of foreigners.
Contacts already had with homes in country - contrasts to city homes and likenesses.

Seeking children of other races and types as members of Union School of Religion.
Visits to Orphan Homes, homes for Cripples, or for Deaf or Blind, to Emergency Homes for families in need such as St. Barnabas House.

Visits to Metropolitan Museum to see models of homes of other times.
Using missionaries and missionaries' children to tell of their contacts.
Securing national representatives to describe their home life.

Possible contacts of an Indirect or Vicarious Type:

Thru pictures and stories of home life of other races or nations. One group centering on one type and another on another type. American Indian, Japanese, or ?

Thru same means visualizing homes of long ago.
Jesus home life.
Stories of patriarchal home life.
Certain stories of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph.
Thru playing the games played by other types of children.

Problems of Children Most Important to Deal With:

Problems of relationship with other children.
Problems of relationship to parents and other adults.
The child's developing of a religious appreciation of life.

Possible Expressional Outlets for the Children:
(in Art, Poetry, music, Handcraft, Drama).

Some Important Research Questions:

a. What are the situations natural in the lives of these children in which sensitiveness to the holiness in human life may develop? What is the place of the teacher and parent? Should we initiate the situations? Should we wait for them to emerge of themselves?

b. Should these children be introduced to the idea of God? How? Should the child's thought of God and our thought of God differ?
What theological conceptions should be avoided? Why?
To what extent should the risks, the adventure and insecurity of real life be shared with these children?
How much protection and dependence should religion foster?

c. How measure the comparative values in direct and indirect experiences?
d. Should regular periods be planned for as worship periods? How often? How judge their value?

e. What should be the contribution made thru music in the school experience?
What thoughts should be embodied in children's songs?

f. How should conduct problems in the groups be faced?
What types of problems should be faced by discussions?
What techniques for the discussion of problems are most valuable?
When should conduct problems be handled arbitrarily by the will of the teacher?
When should conduct problems be ignored?
When should they be handled indirectly with the children unconscious of what is happening?

Source Material: Books, Pictures, etc.

A Preliminary List of Suggestions.

The Bible: Stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Jesus.
Hebrew Home Life: Lobingier; University of Chicago Press.
Boys and Girls in Hebrew Homes: J.L.Keedy; Pilgrim Press.
When I was a Boy in Palestine: M.J.Kaleel (This series)
The Beautiful Childhood; Boulding
The People of Palestine: Elihu Grant.
Orient in Bible Times: Elihu Grant.
When I was a Girl in France: Beuret (This series)
The "Twin" series.
Every day life in the Colonies: Stone and Fickett; Heath
Pilgrim Stories: Margaret Humphrey.
Story of a Chinese Baby: Mary Entwistle (This series)
Neighbors: Jacob Riis.
Our Japanese Friends; Ruth Seabery; Friendship Press.
The World in a Barn; Gertrude Warner; Friendship Press.
Musa: Son of Egypt: Entwistle and Perkins; Friendship Press.
Habeeb: A Boy of Palestine. Mary Entwistle. Church Missy. Society
Home Life in History (In Great Britain from 200 B.C. to 1926A.D.), John Gloag & C. Thompson Walker, Coward McCann, 1928.
A Friend Indeed; Schwartz; Macmillan.
The Land of Fair Play; Parsons; Scribners.
All About Johny Jones; Verhoeff; Milton Bradley.
Bibliography prepared by Rose M. Russell, 1922-1923.
Here and Now Stories; Lucy Sprague Mitchel; E.P.Dutton.

Grade II
Grade III

ANIMAL LIFE IN RELATION TO HUMAN LIFE

Purpose:

To broaden and quicken the children's appreciations of values in life.

To aid in a more objective dealing with their own ethical problems thru seeing the manner in which different kinds of animals have worked out their ethical problems.

To introduce the children to some of the cruelties and injustices in human society by way of the animal world, also to lead toward an appreciation of the finer features of human society.

To create situations in which a sensitiveness to the holiness of life may emerge and grow, and desire to achieve it, such as situations in which our kinship with animals and our superiority to animals may be appreciated and the lure may be felt of the finer life that may come to be in this God-given, growing, evolving universe.

Children's Curiosities and Desires on which to Build:

Their keen curiosity to find out what animals can and cannot do.
Their desire to associate with and to care for animals to whom they can be superior.
Their interest in animals more powerful than they.

Some Possible Direct Contacts for Learning:

Having of animal pets.
Visits to Zoos.
Observation of birds, squirrels and insects in parks a nd on picnicing parties.
Visits to animal laboratories.
Visits to pet shops.
Visits to museums.
Children's own former experiences with animals.

Possible Contacts of an Indirect and Vicarious Type:

Thru speakers who have known animals.
Pictures and story books about animals.

Possible wealth of thought material which may be opened up:

1. The care of animals. Why pets? What pets? How to care for them.

2. The service of animals to humans.
   In labor
   In use as substitute sacrifices.
   In laboratories to discover causes of disease and to produce serums and to help with study of man.
   Animals as food.
   Hindu protest - Vegetarians.

3. Man's idealizing of a world in which animals are all friends. Isaiah's picture of Utopia.

   The feeling of men that good men had a peculiar power over animals.
   Story of Da niel. St. Francis.
   Sa mson, David, Noah.
   Belief in animals' ability to talk. Story of Balaam's ass. Garden of Eden story.

4. Animals as enemies of man.

   Thought of God using animals to punish man.
   Story of plagues in Egypt.
   The locust plague and its story as given by Joel.
   Stories showing modern attitudes toward pests.

5. Ethical relationships between animals and how they they have worked them out.
   Cooperation.
   Selfish and cruel rivalry.
   Animals' fears, ways of protection, deceit.
   Animals' heroisms and sacrifices.
   Parental care for babies.
   Animal parents' ways of teaching their offspring ways of learning. Limits in learning.
   Growth in independence.
   Sense of guilt.
   Sense of property ownership.
   Evolutionary consequences of mere desire for bigness.
   Evolutionary consequences of other ways of doing.
   How babies come to be.

6. Ideals of conduct embodied in Jesus' teachings in accord or in contrast to ethical habits of animals.

7. The worship of animals as sacred by different races and peoples. How this came to be.
   The calf, the bull, the snake, - the scape goat in Old Testament.
   The cow in India. The cat, bat1c, etc. in Egypt.
   Totem animals.
   Modern superstitions linked to this worship.
   The stork. Snake. Owl. Black cat.
   Animals as mascots.
   Why lamb was sacrificed?
   Why pig unclean? Basis of clean and unclean.

8. Some of Jesus' experiences with animals and what he learned.
   Sheep. Shepherd's attitude toward sheep suggestive of God's attitude toward people considered "bad" (Parable of ninety and nine)
   Foxes and birds. Their homes and his.
   Sparrows, God as conscious even of them.
   His protest against animal sacrifices. (?) Is this a correct interpretation of cleansing of temple?

Possible Expressional Outlets for the Children:

(In art, handcraft, prose, poetry, music, drama, service).

Some Important Research Questions:

See questions suggested for teachers of younger groups
What areas of exploration within this larger area are of paramount interest to children of this age?
Do the city child's meager opportunities to have contacts with animal life enhance his interest in this area or detract from it? Is this area already adequately explored in the week day school?
Does this area afford sufficient stimulus to religious thought and emotion to justify it as an area for a school of religion?

Source Materials: Books, Pictures.

A Preliminary list of Suggestions

Bible Stories in which animals are important and where the worship and sacrifice of animals are described.
In Animal Land, Caroline L. Bailey; Milton Bradley.
The Wonder Life; Blau.
The Story of the Bee; Maeterlinck
Bee People; Morley, M.W.; McClurg.
The Story of the Ant; Fabre
Wood-Folk Comedies; Wm. J. Long
Lad; E.P.Terhune (Problem of treatment of a dog in a show).
Saints and Friendly Beasts;
The Child's Book of Saints; Wm.Canton; E.P.Dutton, 1906.

Bird Stories from Burroughs; Houghton Mifflin.
The Ten Commandments in the Animal World; Thompson Seton
Report of Grade III, U.S.R., 1925-26; Dr.Adelaide Case.
Hexapod Stories; Edith Patch; Atlantic Monthly Press.
Clever People with Six Legs; Hawksworth; Scribners.
Baldy of Nome; Darling; Penn. Pub. Co.
Literature of the American Humane Education Society; Boston
Literature of Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
Almost Human; Robert M. Yerkes; Century Co., 1925
First Lessons in Nature Study; Edith Patch; Macmillan.
The Nature Magazine.
Our Wonderful World; Emery Howe; Abingdon Press
Boys and Girls and Friendly Beasts; Entwistle

Grade IV
Grade V
Grade VI

THE HUMAN RACE GROWING UP IN ITS RELIGIOUS FAITH AND PRACTICE

Purpose:

To give children some knowledge of the historical background on which they may build as they construct their own religious beliefs and habits.

To broaden the children's appreciations and tolerance of other forms of religious thought and practice, thru their realizing the needs and desires which they express.

To develop a desire in the children themselves to grow up in their own faith and practice as they grow in knowledge and experience.

To create situations in which a sensitiveness to the holiness of human life and a desire to achieve it may emerge and grow, such as situations in which the children may feel a kinship with other peoples in their quest for the ultimate meaning of life - their search for God and their longing to attain a sufficient sense of security (salvation) to make life worth living.

To give some knowledge and appreciation of the Bible as a record of such a growing up in religious faith and practice - alongside enough of other similar records to give a fair balance of appreciation.

Children's Curiosities and Desires on which to build:

Their eagerness to please their parents by learning something about the Bible.

Their own curiosity about the Bible.

Their own questionings about God, prayer, and the meaning of life.

Their own yearning for a solution of the riddle of the universe.

Their own yearnings for security (salvation)

Their own curiosity about all that is mysterious, - the beginning and the end of life.

Their interest in magical power.

The conflicts they are feeling between ideas taught them in Sunday School and those coming thru day school and real every day life.

Their own desire to grow up and be superior.

Some Possible Direct Contacts for Learning:

Children's own questions.

Children's own experiences in prayer.

Visit to East Fourteenth Street to see models of ears, hands, legs, etc., sold to worshippers to use in prayer for recovery from ailments.

Visit to China town to see worship in Joss House.

Visit to Roman Catholic church on Morningside Drive.

Securing of certain charms; such as prayer beads, lucky stones, crucifix, idols, Budhist prayer wheel, a philactery or prayer shawl or Mesusoth such as were used in Jesus day and are still used by certain Jews.

Observation of certain superstitious practices; Making of sign of cross, tapping on wood, looking over left shoulder, avoiding number 13, planting by light of moon, putting horseshoes over doors or placing of floral horse shoes in shop windows, sprinkling with holy water, repeating Pater Noster or Shema, being afraid to go to bed without praying, seeking mediums for guidance and prediction about future.

How did we come to use Christmas trees?

Why dance around a May pole on May first?

Do other people have Thanksgiving festivals? How they have come to be.

The children's own aweinspiring experiences at waterfalls, springs, beside great stones, before mountains, in the midst of forests.

What and why do we feel like worshipping at such places?

Certain Fruitful ranges of historical experience that might be delved into by the children:

1. The worship of spirits in trees

Modern remnants and our common experience of worship.
Christmas tree
Mistletoe
May pole
Lines of trees in architecture (Especially Gothic
Abraham's Oak - still worshipped in Palestine.

Stories of Abraham. Successive worship experiences under trees. Details of why and how he worshipped. Meaning of sacrifice and its ritual and the blood covenant.

Bible story of creation. Gen. 2 , with its two sacred trees.
Greek story of creation, told by Ovid. Two trees as first spirits.
Story of Saul seeking oracle of Mulberry tree. 2Sam. 5;
Story of sacred Oak of Dodona where Zeus gave oracles by means of rustling of leaves and thunder.

Story of sacred oak of Geismar which St. Boniface cut down, an oak sacred to Thor, God of Thunder.

Some story of Druids, priests of the sacred groves.

Sacred groves, terebinths in Canaan.

Developmentof artificial trees, or posts, the asherah.

2. Worship of spirits in stones.

Sacred stone in Mecca. Blarney stone.
Story of Jacob's ladder.
Story of worship at Gilgal. Compare it with the ancient worship at Stonehenge in England by Druids.
Saul's worshipping in Gilgal. 1 Sam. 11;12;
The story of the Sacred Stone , Ebenezer. 1Sam. 7

Tables of the law in ark - probably two sacred stones from
Mt.Sanai. Stories of the magical power of ark in battle against Philistines. Sacred dwelling place of divinity could be carried about. 1 Sam. 3;-7,

3. Worship of spirits in springs.

Worship at springs by Bedowin Arabs today.
Stories of Isaac and Jacob; quarreling over wells. Oracles held at springs.
Ancient song of the well. Numbers 21. 17f.
Story of Hagar. At a spring the angel appears.
Story of setting up of santuary at Dan at source of Jordan. Story of Micah. Judges 17;18
Story of Moses striking rock. Divinity brings water.
The stories of David and Saul full of many episodes revealing sacredness of places, consultation of oracles, Nob, a city of priests, sacred bread, sacred blood, tabooed food, speaking with the dead, etc.
Setting up of worship in Beersheba - Well of the Oath
Sacredness of Jordan River. Story of Elisha and Gehazi.

Tradition of Jordan and its symbolism in Negro song and other literature.

Stories of modern Holy waters -- the Ganges.

4. Worship of spirits in animals.

Story of Golden Calf
Brazen Serpent in temple and story of serpent in wilderness to explain it.
The wild goat as prince of demons of field. Lev. 17:7
The scapegoat - how he was sent out into the wild woods as an atonement laden with sins of people to prince of evil spirits.
Worship of animals in Egypt - the cat, sacred crocodile, bettle, etc.
Worship of animals among American Indians.
Totems.
Sacred cow in India.
Tabooed animals - sacred to enemy cults, such as the pig.

5. Worship of spirits in mountains.
Gods of thunder and rain.
Story of Moses and discovery of God of Sinai.
Story of Elijah and Ahab. Contest on Carmel and flight back to Sinai and vision there.

Mount Zion - Gerezim. Samaria, Sacred mountains.
Centralizing of worship on Mount Zion and building of temple.
Stories showing the progress of belief to the place where Jerusalem came to be thought of as invulnerable because the dwelling place of Yahweh.

Mount Olympus - the abode of Greek gods.
Ancient prayers for rain and prosperity, in regarding thunder as God's voice, earthquakes, lightning, storms and meteors.

6. Worship of God as warrior chief - or as special helper who can appear or disappear or who sends angelic messengers to talk with men.
Stories of Abraham and angels who appear to him.
Visit of Jove and Mercury to Baucis and Philemon.
Story of destruction of Sodom and angel visit.
Abraham's plea for his nephew.
Story of creation - God talking and walking in garden.
Story of Gideon - angel appearances and dreams and Jahweh fighting in battle for Hebrews over against other tribal gods who fought for their people.

7. Ways of worshipping and gaining from the God what men want. Sacrifices.
   Simple comunal meal.
   Ritual of sacrifice at the high places.
   Human sacrifices.
      Story of Abraham and Isaac
      Story of Jepthah
   Seasonal festivals,
      Spring, fall, Sabbath, new moon.

8. Thought of God as Creator and Ruler of the Universe. Psalms. Job. Amos. Story of Aknaton of Egypt.

9. Thought of God as Father of all. Jesus' conceptions of God as Father - shown in "Prodigal Son", "Ninety and nine" "Lord's Prayer"Parables of Forgiveness; his contacts with worship in the temple.

Children's Problems most important to deal with:

How think of God?
Is he good?
Is he a man or like a man?
How powerful is God?
How does he take care of us if at all?
Does he punish us when bad and bless us when good?
Does God help us to do things?
In what ways may we lean on God?
What will he give us if we ask? Is God magic?
Does it matter what we think about God?
Did the way people used to think about God make any difference in the way they lived? Or did the way they live make a difference in their thought of God?
Whichever way you think about it, is it significant in your life what you think about God?

Note:

This material is here given under logical headings rather than in the order in which it would come most naturally to the children.

Probably these religious ideas should come to them primarily thru a series of significant stories told with as clear cut detail as it is possible to secure. What is usually blurred over in the telling of the Old Testament narratives should be made to stand our clearly, namely the actual religious ideas the people hold at the time described and the actual methods they used of communicating with deity and the actual human situations that led them to seek the help of deity. The special ideas of J and E and P need to be eliminated from the records of time before these writers lived

and the actual historical facts as far as possible should be related, especially those relating to religious and moral situations, even tho the Bible stories as such become quite changed.

None of the stories should be told to teach definite morals or religious truths, but to extend vicariously the children's experiences into the past so that they may have a richer background in which to work out their own religious thoughts and practices. The children should be expected to express their own judgments as to values.

Enough of the critical process involved in dealing with the narratives should be shared with the children as seems practical so that the children may go occasionally directly to the Biblical records themselves and may have complete confidence in the teacher's interpretation of the facts.

No book of Bible stories for children yet published has been written with this point of view. Our staff has a task before it demanding careful, scholarly work.

Some Important Research Questions:

Is such a range of exploration of interest to children of these ages?

Who show the keenest interest? The longest interest? How record and measure the data needed to determine this?

Is this point of view of search and of restraint from assertion by teacher of fixed religious truths, inducive to the development of finer religious feelings and appreciations than the usual method? Or is it destructive?

If a change takes place in the children's religious points of view, does this change coincide with any change in ethical habits and attitudes? How? For better or for worse?

Does such a study expect from the children more ability to think and to discriminate between values than they are capable of?

Or do the children achieve beyond expectation?

Do the children become creative in the process?

Possible expressional Outlets for the children
(Art, handcraft, poetry, prose, drama, music and service)

Source Books for Teachers and Children:

A Preliminary List of Suggestions

Bible: Old Testament.
Golden Bough; Frazer: Macmillan .
Religion of the Semites; Wm. Robertson Smith.
Dictionary of the Bible; Hastings, Article on Religion by Kautzsch.

The Religion of the Hebrews; Peters.
Introduction to the History of Religions; Toy.
This Believing World; Lewis Browne: Macmillan
"Story of the Nations", series: Chaldea
Egypt
Syria
The Hebrew Quest for God ; Asher Davidson: Teacher & Taught, London.
A Tale of the Childhood of Man; The tale of a Dawn Man told by himself: Oliver M. Gale: Wm. H. Wise & Co., 1928.

Ritual and Dramatized Folk Ways; E.R.Jasspon & Becker.
The Moral Life of the Hebrews; J. M. Powis Smith; Univ. of Chicago
The Worship of Nature; J. G. Frazer, Vol. I, Macmillan.
History of Egypt; J. H. Breasted, 1905.
History of Assyria: Olmstead, 1923.
A Child's History of the World; Hillyer; The Century Co.
How the Present Came from the Past; Wells. 2 vols.
In the Beginning; Erleigh.
Stranger than Fiction; Lewis Browne; Macmillan.
The Soul of the Indian; Charles Eastman; Houghton Mifflin.
Indian Boyhood; Charles Eastman: Doubleday Page & Co.
Indian Hero Tales; J. H. Cornyn; Little Brown & Co., 1924.

Grade VII
Grade VIII
Grade IX

The Life Story of Jesus, comparing this with the life stories of such leaders as Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, and Gandhi.

Grade X

The Historical Background for Modern Christian Beliefs and Practices.

(A delving into church history for the "why" of the Christian church with its beliefs and practices, thru a study of significant crises and their great men).

For these areas suggestions have not as yet been prepared.

End of

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